

The Origin of God is an incredible story, in which the author is the main character. He is aware that he is sleeping and that everything that is happening to him belongs only to a dream of this world, which in another dimension is a reality. In his dream, he meets the Godlike Light who in fact is our God. The Light carries him into various worlds with all sorts of forms of beings, describing to him how the world was made, what the origins of the Parallel Universes before Big Bang were, of the life in them. The author asks why does the Basic Truth exist, the Life Illusion, which we live every day, how we should pray and to whom, and finally where we were before other civilizations in Terra. Once these mysteries are revealed, the Godlike Light shows to the author 'The Cerin Theory of Universal Genesis' which brings a new view in religion, philosophy, politics and in everything we have known so far about the history and biology of the human being. This is the first work in the world which treats the subject through the light of a new philosophy. This narrative takes place as the background to a captivating love story which develops on several worlds that belong to other dimensions. Here, death is just a passing to another dimension. Later the author becomes a spectator in the name of whom an impressive journey takes place among other parallel Universes.

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-Destiny-

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Chapter 1

I remember now, after so many years, when dawn was clenching night in an apocalyptic fight of past against present, always winning a new date in the calendar of present's eternity, melting past and future, like the morning sun that wraps the frail snowdrops in its rays, turning them into tears on the windows of the bus in which I was traveling from Los Angeles to Dallas. Those were the tears of an American winter. Then, in that greyhound, I met Irene for the first time. I had left Los Angeles for more than twenty-four hours. In El Paso, that beautiful young woman had sat next to me, with her startling green eyes, with her brown hair felling in curls over her shoulders like streams of water cascading over the shoulders of the rocks, that young woman would become my wife, give me a son, make the very destiny of my life.

Today my three-day sojourn in the Netherlands, where I was on business, came to an end. I am in art transaction business. We took off a short while ago from Shiphall airport in Amsterdam with the destination Sydney - Australia and a call in Singapore. I will be staying in Australia for a week and then I will return home in the United States. I'm in a Boeing 747 surrounded by pretty flight attendants. The three days I spent in Amsterdam have been cold and cloudy. Even the Dutch thought that it was too cold for this time of April. At present, I own a fortune exceeding eight hundred million dollars, and yet I feel much poorer than before.

Yesterday I spent all day long in Amsterdam and I put up for the night in the airport until morning when I would take off. I do not know why I chose the airport; I could have had a luxurious room at the hotel. An old woman sat down, next to me, on one of the armchairs in the airport; she was wearing motley clothes and she probably could not sleep, as she kept me awake all night with endless discussions about air accidents, which she had heard of in the past fifty years. Out of politeness, I had to listen to her.

"It was just after the war, more exactly in the 50s, when planes had propellers and were not as dangerous as those with turbines, which go down if a few birds get caught inside. So many aircrafts went down like this." said the old woman.

"Did you fly a lot in your life?"

"Oh, yes," said the old woman with a haughty air, "and how much! Only once did I go through an emergency landing somewhere in Colorado."

"What are you doing in Europe?"

"I visited the Netherland, it was one of the few European countries I had not visited. I have loved going on trips ever since I was young."

"When is your flight scheduled?"

"Tomorrow, lunch time."

"Why did you come to the airport at night instead of staying at the hotel?"

"The hotel? Oh, no, I am alone at the hotel and it's very boring. Here, at the airport, I was sure that I would find someone to have a chat with, just for the sake of chatting."

Thus, the old woman went thirteen to the dozen for hours on end, and I began pretending to listen to her, out of courtesy, with my eyes clouded with sleep, always nodding my head to her and cursing her every time all the more, in my mind. Around two o'clock in the night I decided to get rid of the old hag, at any costs, and I told her

that I wanted to play a blackjack at the casino inside the large Dutch airport, Shiphall. Do you think I got away? No. The old crone wanted blackjack too. So after two hands that I lost, naturally, although the dealer was rather sleeping than paying attention to the game, I gave up, returning to take my place near the gate where I was supposed to get on the plane a few hours later. When at last I thought that I had found my peace and that I would manage to take a little nap, after an hour or so, who do you think appeared? A real-life monster? No! A calamity? No! It was the Old Hag.

"Wouldn't you like to correspond with me. I will write to you from the United States and you can write to me from Australia" said the old woman whom I had told I was heading for Australia.

"I do not live in Australia, I live in New York. I'm an American having some business problems in Europe." I felt that my veins were about to burst, that El Nino hurricane itself with its child and its grandchildren etc. were in the halls of Shiphall airport.

"Really? You are an American? From New York? You should know that life has no meaning without conversation," the old hag said with a shade of sighing in her voice.

"What exactly do you see in a conversation?"

"The very reason to exist. When you do not communicate you are a dead man."

"Very well, but at three and a half in the night, don't you feel that communicating is pretty difficult?" I said, thinking that the old hag would get the drift that she was annoying me and she would leave me alone.

"Oh, don't worry, I don't mind it at all, I even find it particularly pleasant. When I was young, I was with Mark, one of my ex husbands. He was from Virginia, he died because he wanted to die, can you understand this? Wanting to die? Committing suicide? Admitting that life has no meaning? I love life, I fear death. Can people chat there?"

"Probably", I replied, annoyed.

"Probably, but not certainly. When you are dead you are no longer aware of yourself or maybe there is the next world and you become very conscious but when you chat you lose yourself completely in histories and so you forget yourself again. I prefer the latter "self-oblivion" only because I fear death.

"Do you think that certain behaviors, even certain hobbies, are due to the fear of dying?"

"Young man, never forget this, I am an old woman who has spent her entire life thinking of this subject. Fear of dying gives birth to conversations for some, others knit, climb mountains, swear, steal, or lie, or drive cars or ships. The fear of dying gives birth to a hobby or creates habits for you. When I was young, men wanted to talk to me and I would refuse it. Now it is I who wants to converse and most often I am rejected. Tears were falling down from the old woman's blue eyes that were still young and that came into such strong contrast with the wrinkled skin on her cheeks that had been marked by the passing of merciless years. I felt pity then. Perhaps I wanted with all my heart to help her but I was just as powerless as the entire human nature before Divinity. I do not know who she was in her life, or where she actually lived, whether she had a family, brothers, sisters, children. We were two travelers in an airport on some continent but so far from each other through age and space that only hazard, this fate's hat, could land on our heads.

"Do you think that there is such a thing as real, pure love, like in the novels" I had asked the old lady who was staring at some fixed point in space.

"If you ask me such a question it is possible that you have not found it."

"Perhaps there is no chance for me to ... once more in my life ... I already consider myself as being quite old, I am thirty three. Other people at my age....."

"How can you talk like that, young man? Never look for love, never. It comes by itself like a thief that sneaks into the house of some rich people at night. It comes sneaking and steals everything, absolutely everything, any independence of some feeling, dream, desire or accomplishment.

Everything depends on the person you love. Human Nature itself tends towards dependence, towards this poetry that we, human beings, deem as love, when the stars become more beautiful and the flowers more attractive, when mornings reverberate like time's prolonged kisses when we are convinced that we have found happiness but in fact happiness resides in suffering, yes, in the sweet suffering of love, interwoven with passion and jealousy and passionate quarrels.

We miss all these, although we do not wish for glory but we tend towards it, towards passion. It is only then that one completely forgets the feeling of death, it is only then that one understands what eternity is, and death is something that can be faced easily.

How many people committed suicide out of love!

This is the paradox in Human Nature my dear young man, people are afraid of death but they long for the great love, that pure and absolute feeling that can push them towards death and they can welcome it with open arms like it is a savior of their own love itself. The sense in existence consists of its non-sense. Can you see that black man polishing these interminable corridors all night?"

"Yes" I replied, being visibly interested this time. I could say that I had entered that phase of tiredness when it is not even necessary to sleep any more, when the body functions on its own like a car that has no breaks.

"Well, my dear young man, it is possible for that black man to be much happier than both of us, or much sadder, naturally. Happiness does not reside in richness, positions, money or who knows what flatterers around you.

Happiness is when you as a human being consider yourself to be truly realized, and this does not exist without the so-called great love. Do you think that a great employer who has fortunes of millions of dollars is happy? I can tell you for sure that as long as he has not discovered the great love, he will not be. He will tell himself that he is superior to other people and perhaps from the point of view of his fortune he is, but he is not happy.

There are some people who seek happiness their entire life and do not find it.

This is not because they do not know where to look for it but simply because they refuse it as being something unfamiliar to their conscience. Then they accept the idea that life is a perpetual suffering, that they are true fighters confronting it, but it is false, they are estranged from their own selves, so much that their own birth date is just another day in the calendar, when they wish they had not been born. Life doesn't need to be confronted but accepted as a state with all its joy and misfortune. A bad thing is never the worst thing, there is always going to be something worse. I have been to prison for six months; it was in the late fifties. A stupid car accident. I admitted I was guilty. I had drunk a bottle of champagne and I drove. I think that it is there, in prison, that I learned to be happy, yes, it is strange, but I learned to become completely happy. I became aware of the fact that the harm that had fallen upon me was much lesser than the situation in which people sentenced to death were, but even if my fate ever brought me to the death cell, I would understand that there are worse things and life has to be lived, by living it and not being like a dead man.

Do you think that some heroes that died on the battlefield were sad because they knew they were going to die? No, for them it was a reason to be proud; death for a cause became an ideal, many of them were a kind of kamikaze in their own way. These are people who, by understanding life, understand death as well. Like the simplest

philosophy possible, like something normal about which you need not wonder. The moment when you ask yourself a thousand questions you become as many times more estranged from yourself. Do you think that I have never wondered, in all these eighty years I've lived, why I was born, why I am not dead yet and why I am now in this airport in Amsterdam, in the Netherlands? The answer is a simple conversation. Perhaps now you understand why we need conversation, why sometimes we feel the need to admire the Great Bear, the Milky Way, for a whole night, feeling the tumult of the Universe in a soul that lost its way on the roads of earthly time, so winding and enigmatic. I've been obsessed for many years even with the very concept of an enigma. For many years I equaled it with Life itself. With Death itself and with Destiny. If then I consider all of them together as being an enigma, now I am convinced that each of the three is an enigma. So there are three enigmas. One thing is certain: Love. It exists both in life and in death, and in Destiny. It exists in reality like a halo of stars over a hill with freshly mown hay. It exists in the scent of hay, in the chirp of crickets or of the starry vault, but its existence does not rule out the three enigmas but it deepens them like wells dug deep into the rock from which, in the middle of the desert, life's cold and purifying water soars, the water that signs the moment of our birth after which we will become aware of God.

The water of the seas and oceans that shouts at those who are not born yet, through the hum of the waves, at those who shall wonder just like we do about Life, Death and DESTINY, the oceans' hum that merges with the deaf siren of some ship, a siren that reminds the unborn that there is a present, meaning Life, Death and Destiny. I am an old dusty hag whom you're probably listening to without paying attention to what she is saying, an old hag who used to be a philosophy professor in a New York university, who tried to understand some things, if not to find out and who has reached the conclusion that the best thing to do is not to think, yea, not to think, that is the wisest philosophy, to think, to love, to understand happiness as something not to be sought, not to be found, not to be desired...

The old woman was staring at a group of passengers who were gathering at one of the neighboring gates. Dawn was breaking. There was an aircraft that was to take off and head towards somewhere in the Middle East. We were both looking at a group of three Arabs in their traditional clothes, about seven, eight women who were joining them and a multitude of children who were being kept in check by their mothers, who were constantly babbling all kinds of words to them in their language; the children were probably impatient and excited before the flight. At a certain moment, the old woman said:

"I wonder if these people are happy. Each of them has several wives and who knows how many children. Have they really found love, do they know what selfrealization means? I have sought for them all my life. Love, Happiness, Realization, and I never truly found them. I did not find them because I sought for them. Look, Sir, at that blind man behind the Arabs. Has he found the Path? Aren't we perhaps more blind than he is? He has a white walking stick to help him, we cannot even have this as some kind of help. Can we really See? Can we really Hear? Can we really Feel? Or perhaps we shall know all these when the water inside of us is in the ranging waves of who knows which ocean humming with the wish for future reincarnation of the unborn who probably have lived centuries ago!

Why have we been given the curse of Life, of Birth and of Death? Why are we are doomed to hasten on the road of life, bare-footed, bleeding, exhausted, thirsty, without finding but seldom a well to quench our thirst? Why have some of our fellow beings come to scourge themselves in public in order to chase this Curse.

Why was the existence of Christ necessary? So that he should be resurrected for

us?

Why are we waiting for him to Return on the oceans waters of the yet unborn?

Why has Christ sacrificed himself for Us?

Why do we need Christ? And does He exist in Us, in all of us? Because there is Damnation."

The old woman looked towards the gate where the Arabs used to be. The plane had taken off a long time ago. Now the Arabs must have been above the clouds. She was looking at the deserted gate or at nothing. Nobody could have told, just like nobody could tell what she was thinking of. She was motionless for a while and then she told me:

"Please do not be angry with me, Sir. I know that many people do not pay attention to me, maybe I am too out of fashion for them, who knows. I am trying to find my peace. This is all. When I traveled from New York to Amsterdam, the lady next to me put her headphones on just so as she would not to listen to me.

I have the feeling that nobody understands me any more, that I am an ancient relic lost on one or another airway of the globe, that the new generations are no longer interested in life or death or destiny. Perhaps they live them all more profoundly by not thinking of them. I do not know. We have come to a true alienation of the postindustrial age, when man becomes a machine or a mechanism in the social works.

Perhaps from this state his concept about existence has been modulated, accepting it like a fate-given thing with a scent of damnation washed by Christ before the Internetconnected computer.

I cannot stand the computer or the Internet. Do not ask me why because I myself don't know what to tell you, I have no idea." The old woman took her hand to her brow and leaned her elbow on one of the armchair's backs. She was looking out the window at the planes that were rolling on the runway and making various maneuvers around the airport. She was probably reading the great number of logos of the airline companies, or maybe she was looking at the planes without seeing them, I do not know.

Eventually she fell asleep with her mouth wide open, rattling noisily. The passengers were already gathering at the gate for Singapore, Sydney. The old woman was sleeping on. I would have liked to wake her up. To ask for her address so that I would write to her. I was sorry, very sorry, I had to leave her. I had known her for a few hours and it was as if I had known her for a lifetime. She had become one of my dearest people. I felt like shaking her, waking her up, but she was in a very deep sleep. It was better for her to rest and stay with her dreams from another time, maybe from another existence when she was young and courted and loved and who knows what guys were trembling with joy when she did them the favor of dating them. I did not even know her name or her address. Yes, then I would have wanted her address more than ever, I would have liked to write her a letter every week, I would have asked her to write to me about existence, about life and death and love. Just now when the Sydney Boeing was moving in and aligning to the gateway I felt how painful it was to say goodbye to this old woman, I realized how much I needed to have met her in my life at least once and how much I would have needed her to write to me. Eventually I took a pen and I began writing my address for her, my telephone number, and the words:

"Life becomes beautiful when you truly miss somebody, when you want to hear at least a word from that person, let alone a conversation.

Yours, forever, Sorin Cerin

I put the note in one of her pockets. I headed for the checkpoint and boarded on the plane. A fine and cold rain was falling in Amsterdam. It so happened that I got a seat at the window from which I could see through the large glass window of the airport the old woman sleeping. I was looking at her without moving. Eventually I heard a flight

attendant's voice explaining to us how we were supposed to fasten our seat belt and so on. In fact, I wasn't interested. My watery eyes were looking straight at the old woman who was fast asleep. I was crying. The plane started moving. In order to see her now I had to turn my head. The airport was getting gradually smaller. The old woman got lost in the horizon. She was supposed to go to some place in America. Would she wake up in time? I do not know. I was crying. Suddenly I heard the engines racing. The plane was gaining more and more speed. We were in the air, we were taking off. After a few minutes the heavy leaden clouds turned into a more and more luminous fog until it disappeared, leaving the sun to flood the whole inside of the plane. We were flying. One month after I had got to the United States, I received a card with the following text:

"I didn't think I would miss, really miss a conversation either.

Lots of Love, Louise Robinson"

Since then, I never received anything.

Chapter 2

The flight attendants began serving the passengers and a pilot announced us through the microphone that we were flying over Berlin. I was able to discern the Brandenburg Gate and what was left in nineteen ninety-seven of the former Wall, the famous Berlin Wall that now seemed like a snake cut into several slices. I wonder why we needed walls so much in our history.

The human personality, if it was free to go no matter where and always nowhere, built walls, precisely so that feelings gain a meaning, a prison of its own from which it can cry, struggle in life's torment in order to create. Another clue that true human happiness consists of suffering.

A free man is a man who is fettered by his own self. A man surrounded by walls is a man who is free to think, to always dream about what is beyond that wall. I have met several immigrants who, after escaping from behind the Wall, became apathetic, crushed by the deceitful freedom of traveling over borders. They were unhappy and they would have wanted the Wall again, perhaps they dreamt they were building it at night.

It was the only moment of their complete happiness, but the freedom of frontiers no longer allowed them the freedom of building the Wall. Some citizens of the freedom of frontiers hated it and the others adored it like a deity that died and one day would be resurrected. Only after the Wall was pulled down they both understood how different they were, how many Milky Ways separated them and, paradoxically, no. The only thing that kept them together was the Wall, the symbol of the lasting connections in Human Nature. Eventually its ruins were colored and drawn on with graffiti. Thus, it seemed more human for both sides. Man has always been attracted by the package rather than by the content.

What is the difference between a savage man on some island that was selling very valuable raw material in exchange for a few colored but shiny little stones and the modern man who contends himself in being the victim of a brazen advertising industry and who buys a product only because it has got a showy wrapping or it belongs to a brand that is excessively praised by the advertising industry system? Not One! They both need a Wall, if it is possible, graffiti-colored or wrapped in the most

human way possible.

Will we ever get rid of the Wall and look the merciless immensity in the face? I do not think so!

We need the Wall as a shield, a guide mark, beyond which we know that there is Something rather than knowing that beyond immensity there is Nothing. For this reason, we are born with the Wall in our hearts and we die with the earth inside us, trying to cross it only when we leave the material part behind it and the spiritual part beyond it.

The Wall inside us is the very frontier between matter and spirit that will never be removed as long as we are Humans. By pulling down a Wall, you don't remove only its matter, but just as much the spirit that created it, namely the frontier between life and death. The question is what do you put in its place? None of the two spirits will accept the other. The answer in this case was simple and, yet, so complicated: Graffiti.

Wrapping. Color that would cover the history of human personality. If it is possible, to lay over the stern gray of the Wall cheerful, welcoming colors, so that tourists can gladly have their picture taken behind the wall and It, the Wall, would become a kind of souvenir through the thousands of little stones carried away in the tourists' purses, suitcases or rucksacks, a gay souvenir of a garishly colored history. The history of the human society, had it not known wars, atrocities, vile deeds, cowardice, betrayal, would have had to invent them, so that through them it could cross the Wall towards spirituality and culture.

The human soul in itself is both prison and freedom, both social and antisocial, both church and tavern, both faith and disbelief, and all these will exist as long as Man exists: an angelic being or a demoniac being? Perhaps the most comprehensive paper in demonology is the history of mankind, the true history and not the one sung by all kinds of flatterers or of people pursuing interests at a certain moment.

I still visited my wife every now and then. The last time, a year ago, she told me: "Which Sorin? Oh, the one who was in Los Angeles and now is so old, so old, over ninety years."

I was only forty and I was standing before her. What could I tell her? I was looking at her. She no longer had that delicate and childish little face that I had once met in a greyhound so that, later on, we would promise to love each other forever. Her features had grown harsh. She had an absent look in her eyes, not interested in anything around her. Looking at her, I was overcome by many memories from the years we had spent together. The day when we lost our little boy and we both looked for him, terrified, in dozens of police stations in New York. Our happiness when after three days we found him somewhere at a police station in Queens.

I remember the afternoons when we would navigate on East River or the concerts in Grand Central Park when we sang and danced and kissed not only one time in the rain.

The day when the doctor told me: "Your wife gave birth to a little boy." When I took her to the hospital... She was so frightened... When we shared the same bed, studying...

It had been more than ten years since she was in the sanatorium.

White locks of hair begun to shine in her hair. All this time, not one year had passed without my coming to see her, with Mark. He is all I have left from Irene. I would give anything to make her well again.

Sometimes I feel how difficult it is for me without her. I do not think I could ever accept another person in my heart. Even if I have tried to start a new relationship a couple of times. Every time was a failure.

I could not lie in bed with a woman and think of another. Although the poor

women were not to blame for what had happened to me, although they too would have truly wanted to build a solid marriage, on feelings of true, honest love, it was not possible. I admit: I was to blame. After a few days I had a strange feeling of hate and despair at the same time. I felt like some kind of a disgusting and deceitful adulterer who spends time with his lover inside the house, while his wife is in town with business. If perhaps I could have overcome this feeling somehow, in no way could I overcome the other one. The other feeling was that Irene would be unable to come home because that other woman took control of me, of the house, of everything. In a word, on our lives. I would always wonder what that woman was doing in Irene's house, in Irene's kitchen. I know that it is strange, but this is what I thought, this is how I felt for years and years. It was impossible for me to start a new life and still... I felt I would cry seeing my wife disheartened and lost, somewhere in a mental institution in Miami. In fact we had been separated for ten years. We were not divorced yet. I told her:

"I want a divorce, Irene." Sorin told her.

I don't know what got into me to tell her this, maybe I needed some peace with myself.

"You should come see me about the divorce, I am a lawyer. I'll get your divorce. Tell me your wife's name and what she did." Said Irene.

I said nothing more. She was my wife. Many people I know told me that I should have started a new life in all these years. I do not know why I couldn't. It seemed only yesterday when she was not ill. It has been ten years. Eventually I told her:

"I don't know of my wife doing anything, I love her very much. Her name is Irene."

"Yes? The name seems a little familiar. If you love her a lot why do you want to divorce her? Is she beautiful?"

"Yes. She is very beautiful."

"Do you have any children together?"

"Yes, a son."

"Then why do you want a divorce?"

"Because she is gone!" I shouted at some point. "She is no longer with me. Her soul no longer exists in the true meaning of the word."

"Is she dead?"

"In a way, yes" Tears were beginning to flow down my cheeks.

"And did you bury her?"

"Not yet ..."

"Well, bury her first!"

"Should I bury her in my soul?" I replied as if to myself.

"Are you happy?"

"No." I replied in a mechanical way, without thinking.

"You poor thing, you are unhappy. Any way, I want to help you divorce. Forget that wretched woman who made you unhappy. Tell her that happiness is not for sale. It is not merchandise. How old is the child?"

"Fifteen. He is a boy."

"Oh, a boy. I would have liked so much to have a boy myself."

"But you do" I replied eventually, unable to refrain myself.

"No, dear sir, you are wrong. I have no one. I wish I had a little boy but the saints in heaven did not let me have one."

"Your name is Irene, I am your husband." I told her eventually.

"You are crazy, sir. How can you say something like this? I am not married and I have no one. I admit I do suffer because of the fact that I have no one, but this is my

bitter destiny."

"You really won't recognize me?" I told her.

"If you continue with this kind of nonsense you should know that we have nothing to talk about. I will call my secretary and order him to throw you out." The secretary was, in fact, a fat and albino stretcher-bearer who had taken his position behind Irene's cell-room, eavesdropping from time to time.

"From now on I will listen to you" I replied trying to hide the pain that slithered in my heart.

"Then can we talk, sir?"

"Yes."

"How many years have you been with your former wife?"

"I met her seventeen years ago, we were together for approximately six-seven years, but we have been separated for ten years. I met her..."

She interrupted me with the question:

"Where did you meet her?"

"In a greyhound. I was coming from Los Angeles and heading for Dallas."

"I think I have heard of this name: Dallas."

"I am sure you have, madam" I addressed her politely.

"Well, and then?"

"Then we stayed together. From Dallas we moved to New York. My wife had received a scholarship with the University of Columbia. It is strange but ever since we met, we were not separated for one single day, years on end. I loved her very much, madam. We used to go out in the afternoon to the docks or the Fifth Avenue or kiss in some coach we would rent on the corner, near Grand Central Park. I loved her. Her name is Irene."

"I can imagine that you cared very much for her. Where did you live together?"

"At the beginning, we lived in Dallas. Then we moved to New York, in Manhattan, across Lincoln Center – you know, the cultural center, although we shared an apartment with a colleague from the university. We have lived there for three months and eventually we rented a two bedroom apartment in Brooklyn."

"Did you fight often?"

"I cannot say that we did not fight every now and then, but not out of hate or other negative feelings, but because we loved each other too much. When you are truly in love you fight sometimes."

"It could be", she replied, lost.

"It was a February morning. It had snowed all night with large snowflakes in New York. Snowdrifts were landing like soldiers on the side of the roads. I could feel the fresh snowy air flooding my lungs. She had been away since the other day. I had no idea where she had spent the night..."

"Were you jealous?"

"It is very possible. I looked for her at the faculty, at Linda's, her friend, in the restaurants on the docks and still nothing. Exhausted, I returned home in the evening. I didn't even know how the day went by. Before entering the house, I bought a bottle of whisky from a grocery on the corner. There was nobody home. I thought she had left me. I began to drink. Soon, my soul's torment was accompanied by dizziness and the strength of the alcohol. I broke a few things in the house. I was sitting on the armchair in the living room, feeling lost. Eventually she arrived. She sat on the carpet next to my feet as if nothing had happened. The influence of the alcohol had almost passed. I did not know what to say. Neither of us said anything for a few tens of minutes. I think that we didn't know what to say then. I felt like crying, laughing, bursting with happiness, with pain, with anger, with... not even I knew what I felt at that moment.

I wished she said something, at least a sound and yet it would have been too much, too unintelligible, too. .. unreal. Then I understood that in a love story it is not good to speak, that feelings have no words and the depth of the eyes never ends; and when I believed in these things most, she told me in a trembling voice:

"Forgive me."

I did not know what to understand. It was as if at that very moment the walls of a cathedral had collapsed, as if all the Manhattan cars' horns were sounded, as if heavens themselves had opened in their entire splendor accepting both the most pious and the most sinful of people. Then, without knowing, without wanting to, without understanding, I said:

"Why?"

This was all. And it was still snowing outside and I could hear the blizzard lashing the window that was vibrating like a soul in love. She put her arms around my legs and I was caressing her hair. We sat like that until morning. When, at last, the snow had stopped. We were not tired at all. We got dressed, took the elevator and went out. The snowdrifts were so big that the cars could hardly pass through the frozen streets. We wanted to call a taxi. They were all taken. None of us said where we were going. We were just walking. We passed by the corner of Grand Central Park where in autumn we would wait for the coaches and we got to Fifth Avenue. We have walked for a few tens of minutes and we stopped in front of St. Patrick Cathedral. We asked to talk to a priest. It was the bishop himself. He asked us what we were doing there. I told him that we wanted to get married. None of us had told the other what we really wanted to do there. I gave Irene a long inquisitive look. She nodded as if it had been the most normal thing, as if we had talked about this subject for years, for a lifetime, even since other existences.

"When?" asked the bishop.

"As soon as possible", we both replied without realizing that we were saying the same thing.

"Do you have wedding rings?" the bishop asked us.

"No, but she can wait here for me and I will be back in a quarter of an hour", I said thinking of the jewelry stores on the narrow streets perpendicular to the boulevard where the cathedral was. He nodded.

"I'll be back in an hour. Be ready."

I told Irene to wait for me on one of the benches in the cathedral. In less than fifteen minutes I was back with two wedding rings having our monograms on them. We were sitting next to each other like waiting for one of the biblical miracles to take place or, if not, a third-degree encounter of humanity with other civilizations. I don't even know when the old bishop arrived dressed in the canonicals. He invited us before the altar. The large and sober organ in St Patrick Cathedral was playing I don't know what score. In the end I said 'yes' looking into her eyes that expressed the same thing. We held each other. It was only later that we realized we had not invited any one to the wedding and that the witnesses had been two men who were praying in the cathedral. People whom we will never meet again. Accidentally, we lost their addresses. Irene looked at me completely relaxed, as if we had never met.

"What a wonderful story you've had. How I wish I had met some one like you."

"I wish I met someone like you too. You exactly, if you don't mind my saying that", I replied, thinking that this way I would find a way to bring her back to reality.

"For now you are married to another woman, sir."

"Yes, you're right."

"First get divorced and then we'll see" she replied with a short smile.

It was the first time that at least for a few seconds she was not lost any more. It was

the first time when I saw her as she used to be. But, only for a few seconds, seconds that made me think that somewhere, in every person's soul, there is a window, which, regardless of how ill they are, can open, at least for a fragment of a moment, a fragment of hope, of light.

"Perhaps you can help me with this, madam, with the divorce. I think it would be god thing."

"Yes I will help you. I don't know why I feel the need to do it differently from others. She looked to the window with gray bars and to the raindrops that were sliding on it.

"Perhaps because you like New York." I replied, hesitating a little.

"This is possible too, sir. Don't you have a more serious reason? You are making me jealous of this woman. Why won't you tell me that she is a bitch, a whore, a scoundrel?"

"If you wish, madam. And if you think so ..., do you really think that there could ever in my life be a chance for me to aspire to marry you?" I told her with as firm a voice as I could.

"We never know that. Maybe. First I have to prepare your divorce file. When I am finished, you will receive an envelope at home in which I will announce you how things are. I believe you have left your address with my secretary."

"Yes. I will leave it."

"Now you may leave, but please wait for my reply, I shall write to you undoubtedly."

When I heard her talking to me like that tears flooded my eyes again. I could not part with Irene, she had been everything to me in my life. We spent so many years together, we went through so many joys and hardships and now we had to separate like two strangers somewhere in a mental hospital, in Florida. I wished I stayed with her a little longer, to look at her, to listen to her talking; anything, if only she would speak to me some more, even if as to a stranger, but I wanted to feel her close to me to hold her to feel her breath that united us for so many years. Could all these be under the sign of the damnation of not being together. A horrible damnation. It was winter and it was raining in Miami Florida. The entire Florida was under waters. What a lacustrian American winter it was that year. I could feel the plants rotting, how they were trying to reject their bodies that a few months ago had been their pride, being admired by everyone, from insects to humans. Now the rain was making their summer memories rot, trying to rinse away the past with its drops. I left the mental hospital trying to refrain from thinking. For the first time, I felt I needed my soul to be empty, to be washed clear of all memories by the American winter's raindrops. The rain, more beneficent than ever, was washing my forehead with its cold drops like ice arrows wanting to kill any memory any pain, leaving only the American winter's rain and nothing else, cold and impersonal. I raised my eyes to the sky waiting to receive as many drops as possible, on my face, on my eyes, on my forehead, on my lips, and suddenly I saw myself asking in a whisper or in my mind, it makes no difference anyway, I just knew that I asked the clouds, the sky, the rain, the American winter, I asked: "Why?" Only once, without repeating myself, without expecting any answer, without believing anything anymore, without understanding anything and in fact without asking my self any more. It was something mechanical, like a leaf that falls down and that's all ... like the rain that falls down and that's all ... like the rocks that guard the ocean and that's all ... just that!

I could feel her breathing heavily because of the pregnancy. I fell asleep. It was before midnight when she woke me up. She was in great pain. I did not know how to help her. I called an ambulance.

I don't even know how it arrived, how we were driving like crazy on the empty streets of New York – only some late and almost empty bus would remind me that we were in a ghost city. It was winter and it was raining. We got to the hospital. They took her to the maternity room. I held her hand tightly, then we parted in the hall, where I waited for her.

I remember what she told me: "Be strong, let's both be strong." I could hear her screaming in that horrible pain. Rain was pouring down, noisily lashing the hospital windows.

She was screaming, screaming, screaming and it was raining, a cold rain that I felt hot then, a rain of fire in a fiery American winter. God, she was in terrible pain all night long; I wished I could help her, do something, but it was no use. I had no power to end her suffering.

Dawn came with screaming and pain and exhaustion and hope and restlessness, yes, restlessness all the way. It was the dawn of the American winter and the rain had not stopped. I was looking through the window at the poplars' trunks soaking with water. Then I suddenly had the feeling that we were living on a lacustrian planet. And again screaming and wind blowing strong and pain but also hope of a new beginning, of a new life. It was then that I understood for the first time that the ocean and the rain and the American winter and the poplars and the sky wanted to be seen and felt and a new life is never born at hazard, just like the flight of a butterfly is not at hazard; it was proved that by the movement its wings, it can create a hurricane on the other side of the planet and this happens just by setting certain particles in motion, by dislocating a certain amount of air that meanwhile intensifies, having the most unexpected repercussions and all this because a butterfly flew at the right moment. Why? Because there is destiny but there is no hazard, because what happens in nature appears as an accident only to us.

Sometimes I would turn my eyes to an impersonal clock in the hospital hall. I would constantly wonder what time it was as if I had been about to miss a plane, but I would never really read the time.

I had no idea what time it was. What difference did time itself make? The only thing that mattered was that I was interested, more than ever, about the existence of time itself and not about a particular hour. Although eventually I realized what was happening with me, that in fact I was supposed to know what time it was, but something much more powerful, more superior to my own desire brought me back to a kind of fear mixed with emotion, to measure the Great Time.

How could I, an ordinary mortal, measure eternity, how could I offend Eternity with a particular hour, minute, second, dimensions that never end because perhaps they do not even exist. Then I heard some one coming behind me.

The footsteps were heavy and energetic. I turned my eyes from the window where the drops of the American winter were pouring down. It was the doctor. I could not ask him anything. I was waiting for something to happen as if I had been just a spectator to my own life and now I would have liked to know how the action of a certain play or movie was going to continue. Would it be worth my applause at the end or not?

"You have a son", the doctor told me.

I could not tell him anything or I probably told him something without realizing.

All I know is that I suddenly found myself alone staring at the clock on which I hadn't read the time. Suddenly I looked carefully at the large black hands. It was ten forty five. I repeated that forty-five in my mind for I don't know how many times. The large black hands had long left that position but for me they had remained motionless at ten fortyfive. Then I understood for the first time that day that I had actually read and memorized an hour. That the further location of the black hands of the clock made no

difference any more.

A life had been born and an hour, a moment had been given an identity, had been given a life. It was raining and it was an American winter. A nurse had just washed the baby and brought him to my wife's bed. I watched her suddenly come around from a kind of torpor, as she was probably very tired. I watched her take him in her arms, touching the baby's body with her face. Then I felt that in fact they continued to be one and the same being: mother and child. After a short while she noticed me heading towards her bed.

"Have you seen our brave little man?" she told me hardly able to speak, while the nurse took the boy and wrapped him in a white blanket.

"Yes, I think that he will be a stout, sports man, like you wanted him to be. He is healthy and strong."

"Yes, my darling. Come closer. Hold my hand. Even if I fall asleep, stay beside me, OK?"

"OK, darling." I replied.

I grabbed a chair and sat next to her in the room. I took her hand.

"I love you. I am very tired ..."

"I love you. I am by your side."

Shortly after that, she fell asleep. I was watching her sleep, breathe, with her ringed eyes, but with an expression of peace and serenity. I could feel she was happy even in her sleep. The pain, the suffering had brought her so much joy. It is a strange paradox of life, it is the basic equation for which we exist: to suffer in order to be happy. We want happiness so much that often the price we pay for it does not even matter and it is always greater.

This is life's mirage: that we should run on the stadium of moments until we die, trying to follow the true happiness, which, once caught, turns itself into suffering, being replaced by another happiness ... and another, and another ..., which in fact we can never reach. This is the reason for man's tendency not to stop, to evolve or involve forever. This is the infinity in the human soul. An infinite column of our souls. I shudder thinking that in life suffering would not exist, this prison that does not let us know the true and ephemeral earthly happiness. If we were aware of its ephemerality, if we realized that it does not actually exist, but only its mirage does, then we would understand that suffering itself is our complete happiness, given to us on this earth. I can feel Irene's palm in my palm. It is inert but warm. She is sleeping. She is happy because she has lived the moment. The moment can be happiness, only the moment. Then the memory of the moment. The memory of a time – so, memory! Never present. Always past, always a past, something re-lived, something that does not even seem to have belonged to life, so that we could begin to understand the beauty of suffering, of memories. Finally only then we can state that we are truly living our life to the fullest. All these without thinking of the relativity of truth. And if you do, if you think or do not think of truth, of its relativity, the most real and true moment is when you are praying to God, when you truly feel the vibration of the Universe around you, that magnificent music of the heavenly spheres that the Creator has given to us as a refrain for love, life, accomplishment, and first of all, a refrain for Hope. Only then you raise your eyes to the sky, without looking for a particular cloud or shade of blue, just raise your eyes to the sky, so that your being can merge with the heavens, so that the Light of the Creator can flood your soul to its most hidden enclosures, so that you can understand that the Creator Himself has sent His only son to die crucified on the wood of the cross, in the greatest of torments, in order to wash away our sin, in order to restore our hope. Regardless of your religion, the Creator is the one who has given us Hope itself, through Him. Regardless of whether you are a Christian or a Muslim or a

Hindu, through your religion you obtain Hope, a window towards happiness or spiritual fulfillment. For the Christians it is the Son who sacrificed Himself on the wood of the cross, it is the cruel and horrifying destiny that he has faced precisely so that we understand that we must bear our own cross to the very end. We must understand that when we are born we are all on the foot of the Golgotha mountain. Then each of us receives a cross that we must take on our back. It does not matter if some people's cross is lighter and others' is heavier. Throughout our life we will have to carry it in order to get somewhere on a mountain top, on top of our happy suffering, or of our happiness filled with suffering, where for each of us, undoubtedly, Death is waiting.

I wonder what would our life be like if roses did not exist in this world? Or the roses' thorns, or the Savior's crown of thorns? Wouldn't we have been infinitely poorer without the crown of thorns? More unhappy, more isolated? Yes, isolated, more isolated from each other. Each religion has a crown of thorns even if it does not appear. It is life's, souls' crown of gold and diamonds. It is the crown of love and compassion, the one that will never start a war, because the only fight that it leads is that of loving and loving and loving, your neighbor. What would we be without the thorns? What would we do without roses? I think that we would live in much more peace, without diamonds, without pearls, but not without thorns. I will return home and buy Irene a large bouquet of red roses, of red thorny roses; no, I will order a room full of red roses. We bear our cross for a lifetime. Christ has borne it but then he was crucified. We are not crucified. We free ourselves through death. The true King has been crucified for His people, being crowned with a crown of thorns. All these in order to take from their shoulders the sin of his people that has had him as a Savior for over two thousand years. Eventually I left the hospital. Irene was still sleeping. The rain had stopped and the sun rays were flooding New York like a great feast where they sat quietly at the earth's table.

I miss Irene. Will she never be cured of her insanity? My wife, an insane woman? I remember the conversation I had with the illuminated Tibetan Lama, Den Xing, who, sitting in the 'lotus' position, tried to answer some of the questions that were consuming me:

"I have been expecting you, young man." Lama told me in such a moderated voice that it did not reveal any trace of surprise, nervousness, and no other feeling.

"Did you know that I would come?"

"Yes, I knew and I also know why you have come."

"You do?" I replied, surprised.

"I will teach you a technique through which you will be able to fight against the demon that holds your wife prisoner, stealing her very destiny. A demon that is the Voice trying to coordinate her, that inner Voice of hers that is so strange. For this, you will have to subject yourself to very strict rules. This is the only way for you to receive the necessary power from the good spirits, for you to have a chance to win."

"What do I have to do, Great Lama?"

"First of all you should not call me 'Great'."

"I understand", I replied.

"You should try to leave all your negative feelings at the gate of the monastery where you will have to remain for a whole month with the monks who will make incantations for the beneficent spirits who can fight the one holding your wife's soul imprisoned in some reality. I believe you know what negative feelings are: hatred, egoism, fear, laziness and so many others. Courage will have to be the one to always guide you, because you will follow your destiny even if you are afraid. For as long as you will be staying in this monastery you will not be allowed to eat any other food except for that which we will give you, that is tsampa. You are not allowed to think of

women, of sexual intercourse or to masturbate. Cleanliness of the body and soul should become the true face of your being."

"OK, but I do not masturbate?"

"I have told you this for the future. In all this period we will teach you a technique that, at a certain moment in your life, will be beneficent to you."

"When will that be?"

"When the spirits who agree to help you will want it. You should never ask when, because you can anger the spirits, those who are telling me at this moment that you will be helped at a certain time. Your Destiny will take such a course that you will end up at a crossroad together with the one who is your wife. At that crossroad there will be a fierce battle between the spirits, in which you will have to be prepared like a tiger hunter who cannot go hunting without a weapon."

"What technique will I have to learn?" I asked.

"The one of speaking to your wife's soul in the reality that is keeping her imprisoned, of talking to the demon that is oppressing her, a technique that you call hypnosis."

"Will I succeed?" I asked Lama with a shade of doubt in my voice.

"Of course you will succeed, young man. I could feel the strength in your eyes from the first moment. It is like an eagle attacking a lamb that got lost in the frozen plateaus. The spirits also agree to help you. The key is that you should be certain that you will finish what you began. Any half measure will take you back to the point where you started."

"How did you find out about my wife's illness?"

"It was a starry night when the sky was so clear and intensely lit by the full moon that I could see through the monastery window the majestic ridges of the Himalayan Mountains, ridges that hide above the clouds most of the time. Now the sky was clear and their snows were shining in a mysterious way in the silver rays of the Moon. I knew that in those snows and in that ice many mountaineers' souls were imprisoned, who had died during their climbs.

The spirits of the mountains do not want souls to find their peace but they want them as their slaves for eternity. As I have told you young man, that night I went into a trance, separating my celestial body from my physical body.

With the power of my mind, once I was separated from my physical body, I headed towards the peaks mysteriously lit by the Moon, whose rays were breaking through to the monastery on a clear sky, with no trace of even the smallest cloud. Since I was separated from my body and until I reached the Everest top, everything was wondrous, a sight one can rarely see even in the images of paradise, as each of us imagines it, for, never forget young man: every man has his own paradise. At the top, I decided to go into another mental plane, trying to look for that of the dead mountaineers, for the one who holds their souls prisoners, the mental plane in which the spirit of this Everest Mountain lives.

I entered the first mental plane where, instead of a snowy mountain peak, I was on the shore of an ocean in a torrid heat. It was daytime and there was a tropical jungle behind me with exotic birds living in the trees and a multitude of noisy monkeys swaying on the creepers. The strangest thing was that I knew that at that moment, in relation to the reality I was born in, I was on the Everest peak at night, under a full moon, and not in the jungle. I was already accustomed, young man, with the mirage of this existence.

My mission from that night was to find the reality in which the spirit of the mountain was, with the souls of the dead mountaineers.

I entered another reality, it was an immense city with skyscrapers, subway, hurried

people running from one place to another, in their daily business. It was strange that I was in the vicinity of an airport where every minute a plane landed or took off.

The city had a strange name, which, naturally, does not exist on any map of our reality, not even the language that was spoken there seem familiar to me. By the air taxis that filled the sky next to the great airplanes, I knew that I was somewhere in the future. In the same manner, I passed through several realities from among which one seemed at least strange to me.

Here, people were hanging from a kind of trees, but they were not actual trees, they were some existential forms that supported people like fruits, giving one the impression that they were growing on trees like fruits.

Perhaps they indeed grew on trees. I have seen so many existential levels, where the place of people was taken by all kinds of strange creatures that seemed to be made of fog or of simple lines. All I am telling you, young man, goes beyond any imagination and is true. But it is just as true that we, from our own reality, from our own existential plane, from our own mental plane, cannot conceive other realities than those resembling ours. We do not understand the others. When I said that people were made of fog, in fact they were not even people, but we, in our blindness, seek for a pattern that is somewhat similar to ours, without finding it because in other existential levels they do not even exist in relation to our level.

The strangest of all things is the fact that their levels do not have a common feature with ours, although our existence interferes in that space, but in a completely different mental level. So as not to speak of the other spaces that have their own mental levels that do not even have an interference with ours. At a certain moment, young man, I realized that by trying to find the spirit of the Everest mountain I was looking for a needle in a haystack, because I could have run through hundreds and hundreds of realities senselessly.

I stopped in a reality where all its creatures were leading an underwater life, only that the ocean was a kind of colorless plasma, let alone that I have seen a reality where creatures were floating in imponderability and the vital substance was one and the same: sand. Thus, I stopped and I said a profound prayer, somehow going into a double trance. Suddenly, a few spirits helped me, powerful spirits to whom the spirit of the Everest mountain had caused some trouble.

They promised me that they would show me the path to the hiding place of the Everest spirit, who comes into our reality and steals souls. They told me that I would have to follow them for a lifetime in order to reach the spirit of Everest, that is eighty years, only that eighty years passed in that existence were only two hours on earth. I agreed. Thus I lived a lifetime with those spirits. The trials were numerous and difficult, but, as I was aware of the mission that I had to accomplish, I passed all of them well. This was all I asked from the spirits. I asked them that at a certain age, as young as possible, I should have an illumination concerning the mission for which I was born in that reality.

I can tell you that the social ranks in that reality was much different from the one in our reality. There, the highest levels were not occupied by the rich, nor by those born in noble families, but by those who were wise, only that wisdom did not reside in science or in any kind of faith, but in the way in which every man managed to build himself a statue, made up of a kind of sand, statues that, because of a different gravitational force, with a lot of skill, could attain a perfect balance.

Well, it was precisely this tendency towards perfection in the balance of the statues of the inhabitants within that existence that was imprinted in their soul. A kind of beneficent state that they also fed upon. They fed upon balance.

I know that in our existence it is impossible but not in theirs. They did not even

have human shapes, but each being had a different form: of a sea-star, a sea-horse, a snake, or all kinds of shapes that geometry itself would deny, considering their existence as impossible, each having a number of dimensions depending on age. At their birth, the creatures were one-dimensional, then they became bi-dimensional, then three-dimensional and so on until they had eighty dimensions when the great passage, that is death, took place.

The age of such beings was depending on the number of dimensions. In time I also understood why their food was taken from the balance of the statues, in which these entities found themselves, because, the greater the number of its space dimensions was, the greater was the need of each creature for balance between its own dimensions.

The status' lack of balance was just like lack of food in humans. After a certain period, with people, lack of food leads to starvation and eventually to death while with those creatures it leads to loss of balance, to the collapse of the dimensions, one into the other, and to the disappearance of the creature. The most interesting thing that I lived in that existence, was that this continuous need for balance, this fight for balance, turned your being into a particularly powerful entity, almost invincible in many of the existential levels. Those who had reached seventy or eighty dimensions were already extremely strong spirits that would mentally fight against their anti-world, with those spirits whose dimensions existed by unbalance. A kind of reverse of the world that I have known, which was in fact, let's call it a paradise of the spirits. But what a paradise it was, dear young man! Because nothing can be more superb, no sensation in the world can tell you how enchanting, how wondrous, how serene and beautiful it is when, with all the dimensions of your soul, you finally build your balance. For this you greatly need meditation.

From one dimension to the other, those creatures were meditating each time more, more profoundly in order to find their balance. Their paradise was balance. On that planet, let us call it so although I am not certain whether it was a planet, happiness was not at all accompanied by landscape. Here, on the mountain, you can look to the distance, to the other snowy peaks, admire the Yak herds and the flowers that clothe the feet of the mountains like colored embroideries from emperors' clothes. Here on Earth, we can say: what a superb landscape, what a majestic view, but there, in that existence, we cannot.

For them the only superb landscape, the only majestic view was the statue they created, a kind of alter ego, in which they found themselves and which they kept shaping throughout their life, at the same time shaping themselves. These creatures, these spirits found inside themselves, in the communion with their own statue that they kept shaping, an indescribable happiness and serenity, that the most beautiful earthly landscapes would seem pale in comparison to the joy of feeling the resonance of your balance vibrating in all the dimensions of your being. In this resonance they also found wondrous sights and music that enchanted you with their divine melodiousness, and wisdom that people on Earth could never even dream of. It was only there that I understood what it means to truly live the reality of a dream. I think that an earthly soul programmed to the spatial, temporal and psychological coordinates existing on Earth, to the wish for freedom in the space of sights that surround us, would have most certainly died with boredom, would have destroyed himself, not understanding that world where the true experience resided in a balance of internalization.

Any prison cell, no matter how unwelcome, would have seemed a paradise to a human soul in comparison to that existence, because we live the illusion of our environment as a unique and complete reality, without understanding how ephemeral and how insignificant we are.

Thus I have spent eighty happy dimensions in that existence, rarely shadowed by

entities from a contrary existence, which, as I have told you before, fed on unbalance. It was a kind of rival empire, whose way of life would have ruined our meditative serenity, our balance, destroying us. Our only weapon against these spirits was to enhance as much as we could our balance's resonance, to reach a state of beatitude, so that, with our balance, we would unbalance their imbalance, thus bringing them to a kind of balance. I am using the word 'malefic spirits' because they were always trying to attack and destroy us.

While we were adepts of universal harmony, of an architecture of peace and cosmic understanding between spirits, the others were the exact opposite. Spirits who caused hatred, division, cosmic disharmony.

They were adepts of total conquests, of elimination from the universe of everything that was defeated, something of the winner-takes-it-all kind. They accepted a competition of negative values, of hatred, selfishness, baseness, because they deemed as true syntagm of the kind "the end justifies the means".

They deemed exterior expansion of spaces as being a vital factor in their actual evolution. For these spirits the exterior spatial view was like it is on Earth, felt on the basis of similar criteria.

They did not feed by finding a balance of their own statue in which one can reflect his soul's dimensions but they fed on the energy of souls in other mental levels, such as those on Earth, souls that do not exist through interior meditation but they lived with the spatial idea of the surrounding environment as a view or landscape. All these tridimensional souls, among which there were also those on Earth, were a good and compatible prey for the malefic souls. Thus, some of the strongest ones took possession of certain spaces in certain mental levels, and others only took a ride through such mental levels in order to enslave some soul on whose energy they could feed.

Thus, at a certain dimension, because in there I could no longer call it an age, I had an illumination that revealed to me the mission I was there for. I understood that I had been born in that mental level in order to find the malefic spirit living on the Everest killing mountaineers whose spiritual energy it would steal. In time, dimension by dimension, for it is inappropriate to say year by year, I realized through meditation more and more aspects about these malefic spirits of imbalance, even trying to communicate with some of them although I felt horrible pain and states of illness that cannot be described because even meditative communication created great disturbances and distortions in the resonance of my balance.

I was looking for the spirit who in the mental level, where I started out from, was living on Everest peak. I found it with great difficulty and completely by accident, in one of the battles that I would lead in order for us not to be conquered by these malevolent spirits.

As I kept looking, dear young man, for the Everest Mountain spirit, I came into contact with a spirit who told me that it was more modest. That it did not have the power nor the hierarchical ranks that the Everest mountain spirit had, that it was using only the energy of one woman in the United States, whose soul it was holding captive in an existence of an intermediate mental plan, belonging first of all to paradoxes and ambiguity.

If you ever fight this spirit you should know, young man, that the fiercest weapon it holds is paradox. It is keeping that American woman, Irene, prisoner behind the bars of paradox from where it draws the sap that is so necessary to its existence.

Any Earthman, no matter how good, pious, perfect, hides somewhere in the depths of his being the negative part of the soul, that part of hatred, jealousy, of the evil that he cannot deny. This is how we have been made to be born in this mental plan by our Creator. This is why the malefic energy of our souls is so much sought after. This is the

manner in which I found out about your wife. The other things concerning her family came naturally by a simple meditation."

"I thank you with all my heart, Lama!"

"You need not thank me, but you need to thank the spirits that helped me be born in that mental level and that had the vision of hazard, so that I would be worthy to find out who the Voice speaking to your wife is."

"So that spirit is talking to her through the Voice?" I asked.

"Yes, young man, through the Voice.

Only the spirits know when the moment of revelation will come for you and your wife, but I can tell you for sure that at that moment, you will not fight your wife's soul, but you will fight the Voice, that malefic voice that will utter deafening shouts in her mind trying to destroy any trace of will, desire, memory, hope, in her soul, which is already drained of the energy that is being stolen from her, every moment every second she is running towards death on the path of destiny.

This is why, dear young man, you will have to fight with all the energy of your being, against the invisible enemy that will be that Voice, with doubt itself, with the delirium and discordance in your wife.

Only then, trying to destroy the Voice with its own weapons, those of paradox, you will realize that gradually your wife will come back to reality ... to the life from the mental space and level where time ... and desire ... and will do not exist. The spirit took her in one of the most horrible mental levels. There is much suffering but will and hope are completely absent."

"How did it happen, Lama, that I got here, in Tibet, and I met you of all people?"

Why did I not go to another Lama, to another monastery? Could it be only the hazard?"

"No, it is by no means hazard, young man.

I thought of you as I discovered you and I sent you through telepathy the path you had to follow in order to find to me. I know that it has not been easy for you, you have flown for many hours by plane, you have traveled by bus on mountain roads, and the most difficult thing was that it took you two weeks to get by foot to this monastery at almost seven thousand meters from the place where the last bus station was."

"I would like to know, dear Lama, if Irene will eventually recover?"

"I cannot tell you, young man," said Lama in that same somehow impersonal voice. "I cannot tell you because it is not good for you to know your destiny beforehand. What would happen if each of us knew his destiny beforehand?

We would know the moment of our death or even the moment when we will have an accident or a great joy? This would destroy us because we would no longer truly live our lives.

The day of our death would become a kind of execution for us, long before programmed, that of an accident also, and the day when we would have a joy would come so slowly that the passing of the other days would become such a horrible ordeal and it would shadow that joy. The very meaning of our existence resides in lack of knowledge of our destiny.

This creates the illusion that we are in control of everything we do and feel in our life, creates the illusion, which in fact is the result of the meaning of existence.

Therefore, the meaning of existence is illusion. Without it, young man, you would be lost, the entire humanity would be lost. You will not know your destiny even if I know it. I will never tell you anything about it because I would anger the spirits that protect you, young man. In life you need very much meditation in order to know only a part of your destiny and not even so is it certain that you have this power or not.

The power to defeat any hope you have.

Once you know what will come you no longer hope for anything, and a man with no hope is a dead man. Even if your destiny were very happy or very unhappy I still could not tell you, young man. Hope is the one that brings happiness into an unhappy destiny, and into the event that ends it, death, young man. All I can tell you is that throughout your life you should never give up, you should know that every time you will be defeated in a battle this will only make you stronger, make you more powerful and profound. You should find in every failure a victory and in every victory a failure. Others have been through what you are going through, and you will go through what others have been through. Never think that humanity begins and ends with you, but also never let yourself be trampled by the fierce battle of life.

Try to fight beneficently in your life through Balance. This will be the supreme weapon that will defeat even paradox in the fight against the Irene's Voice. Now you will have to answer a few questions for me, young man: Do you believe in the Creator of the Universe and of the spirits?"

"I do."

"How do you think that the Great Creator exists, did you ever wonder?"

"No, Lama, I never wondered at this level. In fact, I refused to think that far, because our mental level does not allow us to think in this way."

"It is very true, young man, but our tri-dimensional mental level still gives us three coordinates of the Great Creator whose rays we feel in the accidents of our destiny, rays that sometimes hurt, but whom we have to thank because through pain we value happiness, because we have to improve ourselves in order to get closer to the Great Creator."

"Are the coordinates through which we feel the existence of the Great Creator Love, Understanding?"

"The coordinates through which we know that the Creator exists and is with us are infinite space, eternal time and awareness of the infinite space, of eternal time and of the absolute, to put it briefly, Awareness of the Basic Truth. These are the basic coordinates by which we know that the Great Creator of the Universe exists for us too. Indeed, young man, in the Awareness of the Basic Truth there is love, profound and absolute, kindness, understanding, and all the positive representations of our Conscience multiplied to the absolute that is the most profound depth that the human spirit can perceive. Do we aspire towards the Creator, young man?"

"Yes, Lama"

"Can you tell me why?"

"Because we need love, purity and other such things whose maximum amplitude we find only by aspiring towards the Great Creator of the Universe."

"What you are telling me is true, young man. But how do we know that the Great Creator of the Universe does not have in his Creation also the malefic part of it? How do we know that we do not aspire towards it when we only want absolute love?"

"This I cannot explain to you, Lama, and I do not think that it can be explained."

"It can be explained very easily, young man. If pain did not exist, could we really see what its opposite is, the lack of pain? If sadness did not exist could we understand happiness? If death did not exist could we understand life? If the night did not exist could we understand the day? If debauchery did not exist could we understand purity? If evil did not exist could we understand good?" said Lama meditatively looking to a corner of the temple.

"We could not understand anything of all those." I replied.

"Thus, young man, you will have to understand that the Great Creator of the Universe loves us when he gives us pain or sadness or suffering. When he lets us fight ourselves desperately so many times, for us to find ourselves each time perhaps a little

wiser, purer, closer to the truth and the closer we are to the truth the happier we are, young man, the more we realize how much we should love and praise and look for the Great Creator of the Universe who for you, young man, is God Himself. This is the Path towards the Light. As long as we live in this mental level, in this existence, we will have to thank the Great Creator of the Universe first of all because we owe our Existence to Him."

"I have a question, Lama."

"I am listening." He said sitting like petrified in the lotus position.

"I do not understand what was the meaning of those statues in the existence you have lived in, Lama? I do not think that the balance could have existed only as a result of various interior and exterior proportionalities of those statues. Why did those beings shape their own appearance?"

Why not other appearances, why did they have to shape and not sew, for instance, or to dig. Is it possible that only in this mirror of the statues they could find themselves? Why did they not look in the mirror? It would have saved them a lot of effort. I do not understand all these Lama. Could it be that the meaning of those beings' life was to spend their life carving their own statue.

After death, what happened to the statues that no longer had an owner?"

"The statues without owners were destroyed." said Lama.

"Then what is the meaning of the existence of those statues, or of those beings who dedicated their lives to their incessant shaping?"

"Here, young man, you have reached the key of the seen and the unseen, the key of balance, of the meanings of existence, of life, and of the Universe, the only exception being the Great Creator of the Universe.

The key of all things and phenomena, of paradox, is the Absurd whose meaning can only be found by its Creator. The Absurd is the essence of life, of death, of the mental levels, of the whole Universe. Any meaning we give to life, we give to action in the life that we live.

Each and every time we accept a competition, a race, a fight, everything that has a meaning to us, even such a pronounced meaning as giving one's life, becoming a hero, in science, on the battlefield, anywhere, it all comes down to the Absurd, in time, in space as well as in our conscience.

No matter how lasting what we build is, one day it will come down. Even if we think that our nation or our country will last forever we are wrong. Some day, the planet we live on will be just cosmic dust. Then let us accept that we will occupy for eternity other and other planets in the Universe, other infinite spaces, we are again wrong, because time's eternity is equivalent to its disappearance because what is eternal is nontemporal, not to mention the infinity of space that loses its dimensions at some point because what is infinite is non-dimensional. Any straight line you will draw from one point if you want it to be infinite its end will always get to the point you began from. Therefore infinite space is a point, which doesn't actually exist either. This is why, dear young man, in order for us to exist we need illusion. It keeps us alive.

The passing of time and the infinity of spaces are just an illusion, so is death and life and everything that surrounds us except the Great Creator of the Universe who also holds the key of the Absurd. One thing is real, young man: the Absurd.

We can find the Absurd in every reality or mental level. In our own mental level the antagonism of the Absurd and the Illusion gives birth to the Paradox and the fight between these three gives birth to Balance. And in our life on Earth we need Balance so much. Even if we do not feed upon it, whether we want it or not, Balance is the vital factor that unites us, helps us to create an individual and social consciousness with certain common features like the senses, sleep, language, up to the judicial laws that

urge us to have the appropriate behavior.

Our life, our existence resides in the absurd and the paradox, but we live the illusion that, together with the absurd, gives birth to paradox. By living the illusion, we create paradoxes unintentionally, that bring us to a state of balance."

"But yet, Lama, how do you explain the Absurd?"

"I have been asked this question by many of the monks in this lamasery. I have been discussing this subject for very many years without finding it an essence and without *believing* and *wanting* to find it, because the Great Creator of the Universe uses the Absurd as a reality through which he gives a meaning to the laws of the Universe, of the Being and of the Illusion. We will never be able to decipher it because *only* its Creator has this power. Deciphering the Absurd is equivalent to destroying this entire Dream that is this Universe and which the Great Creator of the Universe has given to us into Being."

"Then, Lama, Being becomes equivalent to Dream."

"Yes, young man, you are right. Everything that surrounds us from our birth to our death, the mountains, the valleys, the snowflakes, the flight of eagles, beauty itself, pain, everything but everything, young man, is a dream, an illusion."

"Which is the difference Lama, between our dreams when we sleep and wakeful state? If everything is a dream, why can we make the separation between these two states?"

"It is very simple" said the Lama. In the illusion of the wakeful state paradox intervenes directly, while in the illusion of sleep paradox intervenes indirectly or differently. And now let me give you a concrete example.

The senses when we are awake send the brain the so-called information on the surrounding environment, like temperature, image, taste, smell, we are able to feel an apple that we hold in our hand.

We live the illusion of senses, of the organs that make up our body.

Well, each action of these senses has as a substratum the paradox under a varied form in this case.

That apple could have been yellow but paradoxically it is red although it has the same taste. Thus, the illusion of the wakeful state creates variety through the paradox directly with all the five senses that is sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste. That apple could have been paradoxically a pear or a strawberry or another fruit. A fruit could have been replaced paradoxically with another aliment and so variety is born, within the illusion of the so-called wakeful state. During sleep, illusion no longer relies on the so-called senses that are illusion too, but it relies on the elements known as existent in the illusion due to paradox in the wakeful state. We will never dream of archetypes we do not know in the wakeful state let us say, beings that existed in the mental level in which I lived for eighty dimensions."

"I thank you Lama for everything you have taught me so far. You know that this conversation will remain printed in my mind for my entire life. At a certain moment you told me that a weapon against the Voice was paradox itself. I would like to know if schizophrenia has paradox itself as its roots or it is another illusion of our existence, Lama?"

"As I have told you Irene is in an intermediate mental level or better said in two mental levels from where that evil spirit can feed upon the energy given by her illness, on her discordance that is schizophrenia. As for the essence of the illness, the difference given by the essence of the illusion that we live in is that with Irene, with her mental disorder, the antagonism and the fight between the Absurd and the Illusion does not give birth to Paradox that eventually would melt into the other two like it happens with healthy people.

Irene accepts every thing, every phenomenon in a deep distortion, with her the senses do not create the illusion of variety, of movement like it happens with healthy people, with the help of the paradox. With Irene this variety and movement is created only by the Absurd and not by the Illusion's Absurd that gives birth to the Paradox and later all three of them become Being. Irene accepts the Absurd as only root of the Illusion as a reality in itself, which it is, but not in Irene's Illusion but in the thought of the Great Creator of the Universe. This is the difference between the illness and our normality."

"That is," I intervened, "Irene's senses are the Absurd."

"Irene's illusion is the Absurd." said the Lama.

"Why can paradox become a weapon?" I asked the Lama.

"Because it can breathe its existence into Irene, which would bring her to a normality and would chase the evil spirit."

"When do you think that Irene will recover?"

"When she accepts the paradox and does not remain anchored only in the Absurd.

This is why it will be the most frightening for the evil spirit knowing that if you defeat it in the realm of paradox Irene will accept them too, thus recovering."

"Now I would like to ask you, Lama, what should be done in life and what should not be done."

"This subject also we can discuss for a lifetime without finding a concrete conclusion."

"Why?" I asked.

"Because since we do not know the Basic Truth we cannot state with certainty what is right and what is wrong." said the Lama.

"Some say that it is not good to think of other people in a bad way because all this evil can come back against you, that it is not good to live a life of debauchery, to kill, to lie, to swear and so many other things that are considered to be ill deeds."

"Our individual Illusion as well as our social Illusion has proven to us more than sufficiently that these things are not good at all.

They attract evil, feeding it with the evil inside us, which, as I have said before, exists in each of us to a greater or smaller extent. The important thing is that we should know how to keep it locked up in each person's soul. The Illusion that maintains our Being over Destiny's moments, has taught us that the greatest wrong is first of all the one injuring others through you.

A part of these become ill deeds also if they injure you. For instance you are not allowed to kill or to commit suicide either, it is not good to lie to others but neither to lie to yourself, knowingly.

Everything that leads to the destruction of society and of the individual is evil. We as a society live through the Being that is building, evolution, development, and as individuals through Being as consciousness, that is through cognition, affection and will, all included in Illusion, Paradox and Absurd.

It is just as good to know that betrayal of the Absurd as a reality by the individual leads to mental alienation and betrayal of the Absurd by the society, to social alienation."

"Is evil one of the causes of social alienation?" I asked the Lama.

"Evil is one of the weapons that help the causes which lead to social alienation." said the Lama.

"How do you judge the society we live in?"

"It is a society with too much evil that emerges from peoples' souls. Experience or the truth of our illusion has proven to us that evil has always led to suffering, wars, in a word pain. I think that we need also peace, happiness and love, especially love. I also

think that any evil thing you do today, tomorrow may turn against you, even a negative thought that for you does not mean much can hurt you one day. For each of us there is a Karma as you Westerners call it, namely what will happen to you today is due to yesterday and what will happen to you tomorrow to today. This is why our good thoughts, abidance by the laws help each of us in a whole."

"Then what about what you told me the other minute about evil. You said yourself that we would not know what good means if we did not know evil and we would not know day if we did not know night. I wonder, if we were all good, perfect, would it be better for us?"

"This time, young man, it is about evolution, of which I have spoken to you before, and I told you that it is the result of society of which you know well who it is due to. Evolution does not mean stagnation.

Every spiritual level has its evil and good, only that these two notions are just as different as the spiritual levels. In an inferior spiritual level evil will have catastrophic proportions and good will be of very little intensity. In a superior spiritual level evil will have totally different proportions being almost one with good, reaching the highest level where these two notions no longer exist.

As you very well see, Illusion teaches us that the superior level for us tends towards good. We, as consciousness, want to evolve positively, therefore towards a certain sense that we deem as positive, meaning acceptable. Everything we accept becomes positive to us and what we reject negative. This does not mean that what we accept cannot be evil too or what we reject cannot be good. So many people are authors of crimes and so many people reject the idea of kindness, of peace, of love.

Therefore, as I have said, Illusion has given us the concept of evolution. We people aspire towards something, towards Paradise for instance. What is important is that we aspire, thus Illusion gives a meaning to our existence. Each of us will try to follow this meaning regardless of whether we are without hope or self-sufficient, happy, we will follow it.

This meaning shows us a certain spiritual level different from the one we are in, therefore the need for change, be it a positive or negative one. In my view, as a good spirit, therefore love is acceptable, good and clean thought, altruism, submission, modesty, suffering, yes, suffering, used as a tool for illumination of the path towards happiness, and so many others, dear young man, and why not, joy.

We always should be happy for the illusion we have from our birth to our death, and which is called life, we should be happy that we are not alone in the Universe but the Great Creator of the Universe is always by our side, to whom, every time we raise our thoughts' eyes in the night we will receive light, so much light that it will be difficult for us to mistake the Path towards Death and a new Life."

"Therefore free will is a part of the Illusion."

"Exactly" said Lama looking at a group of monks who were praying in the room where all kinds of incense were burning with a pleasant smell."Precisely because of this free will, our prayers exist. We know that we can decide in this Illusion that is Life.

Free will is a part of that variety given by Paradox. Let us admit that the Great Creator of the Universe knows our destiny since He can decipher the Absurd too, since He has an infinite power. Once He knows our destiny it already exists and can no longer be changed. The paradox makes us have free will through our own volition, although it is just an illusion that we can change destiny, an illusion that we need so much and that gives us a meaning. Our souls flow towards death like a river looking for its ocean. The destiny of the river is sealed, it will certainly flow into the ocean, but free will can intervene in the case of souls with the syntagm: it depends which ocean. A syntagm that is completely true because every ocean is a certain spiritual level on the scale of values

of the Absurd deciphered only by the Great Creator of the Universe."

"The more things I ask you, Lama, the more I seem to feel the need to ask you more questions. The more I find out and think I have finally understood, the more I realize that there is so much I have to understand, that in the beginning when I came to this lamasery I thought I would have to ask you only one question, or two, in order to understand what troubles me; now I understand that several lives would not be enough and even so the conclusion would still be the Absurd, the Paradox and the Illusion.

Only now I realize how infinite my ignorance is. However, all these things will change me very much, profoundly, a change that I had needed for a very long time, a long time but which could never have occurred without this conversation, without a part of your knowledge, Lama. Here, I have realized that infinity is a point, perhaps not even that much, and eternity is the lack of time and they all lead to the Absurd.

Now I would like to know why the scale of values of the spiritual levels, of the mental levels, of the spiritual evolution so desired by volition, by free will, by the purest and most profound feelings of elevation of the Being is based on the cold Absurd?"

"This question, young man, is the key of keys. All I can reveal to you now is to tell you why it exists but in order to tell you which is its root, its deciphering, they can only be done by the Great Creator of the Universe. Although we wish for elevation, and always new spiritual levels, their number will tend towards infinity.

The Illusion that governs the Being in each of them will change, being always different from one system to another, good will be almost united with evil even if in some superior levels the evil there is much superior to the good here just like it is possible for the evil here to be much superior to the good there. Thus, the Illusion is different from one level to the other. Paradoxes are different only the Absurd is the same because it cannot have its own axiological scale, a certain level. If a thing or a phenomenon is absurd, it is absurd and that is that, not having any degree of comparison of the kind: more absurd. Because the other phenomenon with which the comparison is made is also absurd.

Therefore, the only thing that does not change regardless of the spiritual levels is the Absurd. It remains the only common grounds for the spiritual levels, the only link that groups them into a unitary whole before the Great Creator of the Universe. Illusion and Paradox are in a continuous change from one level to another. Free will also.

The ingredients of Illusion also, which will give birth to increasingly different paradoxes, until they cancel each other. In such a superior system that good becomes at a certain moment monochromatic, paradoxes are annihilated. Their absence leads to the pure Illusion next to the Absurd and pure Illusion becomes of itself the Absurd. This also happens in evil systems, where evil becomes monochrome. Paradoxes disappear, pure Illusion remains that becomes of itself the Absurd. As you have noticed, young man, free will, volition, the desire to evolve leads, even in a system whose destiny is known beforehand, to an evolution that will end in the vicinity of the Great Creator of the Universe."

"I cannot help but ask you in confusion, illuminated Lama."

"Ask me, young man, discussing with you pleases me."

"How is it possible that malefic spiritual levels too can head towards God, towards the Great Creator of the Universe", I asked, this time profoundly surprised.

"It is possible, young man. It is free will; there are the parts of consciousness that will lead to the annihilation of paradoxes reaching pure Illusion. If the last time I did not tell you how pure Illusion through annihilation becomes the Absurd, I will tell you now: pure Illusion, emerging from benefic systems will merge with the pure Illusion emerging from the malefic systems, because each of them will want to defeat the other, to vanquish it. They both will have the same power that is pure benefic and pure

malefic, which will eventually annihilate each other, leaving as the only one and the self-evident, the Absurd, which can also receive the name of the Undecipherable or the Unintelligible".

"But, illuminated Lama, we, by the Absurd, will be a part of the Great Creator of the Universe? Is the Absurd a part of His existence, or is it a distinct entity?"

"We are a thought of the Great Creator of the Universe. A thought and nothing more. The thought belongs to Him but it is not a part of His person, it does not form Him."

"Therefore the thought, illuminated Lama, is different from the person of the Great Creator of the Universe."

"Yes" said Lama.

"How can the Great Creator of the Universe accept that evil should evolve just as much as good, reaching reciprocal annihilation? Why does He not destroy evil?"

"They are supposed to annihilate themselves" said the Lama, "precisely in order to praise the Absurd, to give it full primacy, so that the final victory can belong only to the Absurd."

"What other meanings can you give to the Absurd, Lama, besides the Undecipherable and the Unintelligible?"

"Other meanings, young man?" said Lama and he continued: "The Enigmatic, the Mysterious, the Unfathomable, the Meaning of Meanings..."

"The Meaning of Meanings?" I intervened interrogatively.

"Yes", Lama replied, coldly.

"Then, illuminated Lama, which is, in fact, the Meaning of Meanings?"

"The Absurd", he replied in a meditative manner.

"What do you mean, I do not understand", I continued.

"Only the Great Creator of the Universe can decipher the Absurd. In the illusion we live in every thing or phenomenon has a well-established meaning as a result of desire, of feelings, of volition, of an action, of a phenomenon. The meaning is given to us by the natural and spiritual laws that govern the world we live in, starting with the law of gravity and ending with the law of common sense, dear young man, all these give a meaning to our existence. The same happens in other spiritual levels where the meaning of the beings' existence is given by the respective level, by the laws that act there and which are completely different from those acting here. For this reason you will have to think with completely different structures and laws. On the highest step, when free will disappears at the level of good or of evil certainly laws like desire, volition, feeling and others will also disappear. Once the law disappears, the meaning, as a directional vector, will disappear too. Both vectors, in other words both meanings of the malefic and benefic systems, annihilate each other, leaving the Absurd, which is the sum of all meanings, in which the vectorial direction towards evolution or involution no longer exists. Space and time are infinite, melting and collapsing in themselves, falling inert at the feet of the Great Creator of the Universe." said the Lama. After that discussion with the illuminated Lama Den Xing I stayed in the lamasery for one more month. During this period, some monks helped me learn the Tibetan rituals, how to pray, how to adapt myself to that type of traditional food that is called Tsampa, a kind of crushed mixture of wheat and barley or another cereal plant. I can say with all my heart that after completing that journey to Tibet I was a different man. I could feel how a fire had lit inside my being, and it had begun to change me. First of all, I had a much stronger will, a courage that I could not even imagine I could have before. My fear of dying has disappeared completely, and since that visit the thought of dying has even come to please me, because I know that death is only a passage from one spiritual level into another spiritual level and this passing depends only on us, on

the way we prepare in our life time in order to receive the great passage as we should, in order to evolve to a superior spiritual level. Since that month in the lamasery, I became a man who had regained his somewhat lost self-confidence, from an apathetic person who thought of herself as defeated, I became a man who knew how to always become a winner. In the lamasery, near the snowy peaks of the mountains and the lashing winds I understood the path that I would have to follow patiently in my life. In fact, everything was so simple that not even I could believe it. However, that simplicity was so difficult to understand. In order to be ready not only for death but also for the life here on Earth, we will have to put aside pride, jealousy, egoism, dishonesty, robbery, in a word, the evil inside us, inside each of us, trying to replace it with love, altruism, devotion, sincerity, modesty and the list could still continue.

All these are such simple things, they are easy to accomplish so that we change and still they are so difficult to do at the same time and more than that, so difficult to understand.

The great empires were born out of blood, humiliation, rapes, storms and sacrileges.

Those who are the most glorious, those who discern in the name of the law are still the representatives of the great empires. But what is this name of justice like? Isn't this name Demonic? Then we should not be surprised that each of us needs a wall; at least for hiding. Eventually, the city vanishes behind us. I'm trying to fall asleep.

I am more tired than I've ever been. Soon, we shall be flying above Warsaw, Poland's capital. I'm instinctively checking my watch.

The talkative old lady from America should be explaining right now. I wonder whether she has woken up. My eyelids get heavy, as of lead. My thoughts remain somewhere in Amsterdam airport, with a person who became very dear to me, though I deeply disliked her at the beginning. I can hear a sound, as of a bell, followed by a pilot's voice announcing that we are above Warsaw.

A city with straight boulevards, around blocks of flats like alleys on which a few battalions of Prussian soldiers are threaded in a perfect line. I knew that during the Second World War this city was purely wiped off the face of the Earth. The reconstruction followed – a new identity of that moment, a new way for the Poles to understand life, somewhere between the military style and the rebelled one.

Why rebelled? Because the height regime of some building defied that of other buildings. Maybe the red aristocracy was defying in the same way. They tried to create a state in which all citizens should be equal, where there should be no employers, no rich people and where did they get? The rich are exterminated, the press became a slave and some poor, not all of them, are the new rich people in the Red Empire. The strange thing is that the red rich were much fewer than the former rich, and the red poor were much more and much poorer.

Many peoples reached the conclusion that to try to destroy the Human Misery in a society is nothing else than increasing it to forms that verge on the absurd. Yes, it would be perfect if we all were equal, equally smart, talented, good, it's just that the individual is never perfectly equal to any of his fellow man. Nature created human diversity with the purpose of ensuring human evolution.

I wonder what would happen in a society where all the people would be forced to become geni, talented, rich and equal by an aberrant communism? Do you think that such a society would be possible? I doubt it. Where would the poetry of each of us, the hopes, the dreams be? Wouldn't they vanish away? The poetry of the human soul would become a hideous ode dedicated to the Beloved Ruler, aspirations would become the same with the Ruler's dreams and so would the hopes.

Why Ruler? Because anybody knows that in order to determine people with

different personalities, so without having any sign of similarity, to be equal, a strong will, a Dictatorship is needed. At the end of the second millennium, Humanity realized that there is no equivalent between Dictatorship and Human Misery, accepting the latter, beyond any doubt. We need the Human Misery as it is the one that represents our dreams, our aspirations, our hopes. Had it not existed, this race in which people try to outrun each other, often using dirty means, would not exist in the society. But that's what we are, each of us, different from the other, bearing our own Human Misery within our soul, with our egoism, jealousy, hatred, envy, things that paradoxically led, to some extent, to the evolution of the society, things that we deny, but we need. I don't think that there are people who never sinned, people who never made mistakes, one way or the other, and I don't think that there are saints who did not accept their own sin and did not repent of it.

The term of sanctity itself consists in accepting with humility the Human Misery and then trying to remove it. There are so many individuals in a society who want to become rich or famous or great names. Just the thought of having such a statute includes again at least one element of the Human Misery, haughtiness. How many individuals reached this statute and deserve it?

How many would deserve it but are some unknown geni? Why? Another factor arises here: the absurd of the happening that becomes Destiny, even Divinity; in deed, eventually: Divinity. Our capacity of thinking will be depending on a wall. We won't be able to understand the Destiny or Divinity unless we are up on this wall that will never be high enough to allow us to look over the mountain of Humanity's Sorin, that Alpha and Omega, over the huge mountain of the Beginning and the End, so that we can see God, in all His grandeur. As matter of fact, many people who are rich and famous today will be the dust that the wind of oblivion will sweep away towards the horizon of some dusk, blackening the beams of the star that will wrap the pillars of the end of some day in I don't know what millennium. I fell asleep.

I remember dreaming on a large beach, somewhere in Florida; the waves were laving my feet, which left traces in the sand. I was like a ghost, but yet I was real. A wave brought a wallet to the shore. I picked it up; there was no money, just a bunch of keys and some certificates, a driving license and others. It belonged to a woman who was about thirty, dark brown-haired, white skin and green eyes. I remember reading a name in the driving license: Sandra.

I looked around trying to find her, but the beach was deserted. I took the wallet with the intention of mailing it to the address in the license. Suddenly, I found myself standing in front of a small, impersonal counter line any post counter. A woman-clerk, also ordinary and impersonal, was telling to me that the address from the driving license is not complete.

It can't be. She was telling me to take the certificates to the police. I really thought I would, but on my way there, as I was passing by the Justice Palace in New York, I changed my mind, I didn't want to give Sandra's picture away, it became familiar to me, I felt I loved her even though I had never seen her before. I never understood why we are better, more sentimental, more profound, yes, much profound in our dreams than in real life, living each feeling to other extends, much deeper, sometimes beyond comparison with those in real life. Once I was sitting on one of the many steps laying in front of the colonnades that supported the old building of the Justice Palace in New York. I was staring at the cars, some with an old age touch, others very modern, which turned around in front of me, changing their direction.

This palace, a massive building, guarded one of the most beautiful areas, with inviting coffee houses and stores, in New York. I was staring towards nowhere and yet I felt like I was waiting for something, for Sandra. At one time, I saw a woman coming

out of a coffee house located on the corner of a building in front of me; she was wearing a white overcoat, her hair was dark brown, a little waved, cut at the level of her shoulders, on her back, laterally fastened above her ears with two hair pins. A straight, roman nose, bordered by two superb, vivid, green eyes with prominent eyebrows, which were bending a little boldly, defying the forehead, conferring an appearance of irresistible balance, of special beauty, as she also was a tall, well-proportioned woman. She was Sandra. I stood up and tried to call her, to run towards her. I was shouting over and over again: Sandra! Sandra! Sandra! But she couldn't hear. She turned around and walked down towards the boulevard, in the opposite direction to the Justice Palace; it seemed that she was heading for China Town. I was following her, calling her. Then she turned on a little street; soon I got there too. I had lost her. All I had left were her certificates. I felt depressed.

I started and realized I was in the plane and everything had been nothing but a dream. The bell rang again and one of the pilots announced that we were flying above Moscow, which, not long ago, was the capital of the Red Empire.

The first thought, when looking down, was that the city was endless, a huge city, just like the country it governed. Although we were at an altitude of more than ten thousand meters, each line of the horizon let us know that Moscow's borders were yet farther.

The impressive palaces on the shores of Neva seemed to me as graceful as if I was walking down there. I was somewhere between dreams and reality. Somewhere between the palaces lying on Neva's shores and the enigmatic creature I had lost in my dream.

A few years ago, the future of one half of the planet we inhabit was decided in these palaces, as the other half of the planet belonged to the palaces lying on the shore of Potomac, Washington. The fate and misery and death and life of billions of people was decided in these beautiful palaces of Moscow, which are now smiling, clothed in the sun beams, the sinister smile of the dictatorship, of the concentration camps, of death. This is a smile to, isn't it?

Chapter 3

Ural Mountains appear at the horizon. I think my neighbor dozed off or maybe he is thinking about who knows what. He is keeping his eyes are closed and his head leaned against the back of the armchair that he stretched, like a bed. The hills that turned green, a dark, a northern green, disappear in larger and larger waves. It seemed like I had thrown a stone in a lake that had water weed and the waves turned into the hills we were flying over. The air hostess serves me with a cold beer.

The plain engines sound like a humble bee, a faint buzzing. Who could be the beautiful woman in my dream? No, I don't know her yet; no I don't believe I've met her. I wonder whether happiness consists in love. Or maybe it is completely the opposite. I never thought of defining happiness. I believe that happiness is something in which we find ourselves, something familiar to us, something that we never had and we

will have only in the illusion that some day we will hold it in our palms, calloused by life, which are extremely cold, something that we would take to our lips, something that we would warm the stake of the words, that something that, if we had it only once in our life, would never be happiness again.

This is the real happiness, the Fata Morgana of our ambitions and aspirations, whom we always want to hold, but whom we shall never have; we shall never kiss her passionate lips and we shall never be able to look deeply into the eyes of the mirage like a beautiful love story. Any Fata Morgana, if it becomes reality, is no longer a dream, so a sufferance. The human nature makes everything that becomes tangible and conquered instantly loose a part of the brilliance of that illusion of absolute, namely of Happiness. The sense of our existence, the eternal goal, the eternal summit we should try to conquer is to wish for a new peak, a new goal. An indifferent society, which would eventually deny itself. It would not create, it would not build, everything would become indifferent and we would destroy ourselves. The engine of life is competition and the engine of happiness is the Fata Morgana. Then, why do we exist? Just in order to leave to a certain inheritor a house, a chair, a board that we created?

To leave to those who have not yet been born the new accomplishments of our time, of the present society? To deliver babies who will do the same thing just for the sake of all these, to help in the evolution of a society whose goals are illusory? To bring the unborn on a planet, which would follow us, at the same way, the unborn of the unborn of the unborn? Do we actually know what we really want?

For most of us life also means great suffering, and disappointment, and fight, so it is not a dream with fairies and tales from One thousand one Nights. Don't we know what we want; are we that cruel with ourselves and sadistic with the unborn? Don't we know that the expression "Life is beautiful" belongs one hundred percent to a paranoiac, not to a man that reflect? Then why do we really want the unborn? Why do we want to bring them to Earth? Do we just want to have an object of ours that would help in creating a relationship or is it because it looks good in the society? Life itself is a question mark.

Where are we heading to and where are we coming from in this welter of feelings and thresholds among which we walk on our way from birth to death?

Only Divinity has something to say.

Only the eternal one will know why the fate of the unborn is this and what the meaning of life is. Our sensations make us believe that nothing is happening at random in nature. That each wave that breaks against the shore has its goal, that each flap of wings has its meaning, that each evil or good thought have their purpose, that each curse or forgiveness have their purpose and each time has its time and together they all build the Destiny's Time where birth and death are two children building a sand castle on the shore of the sea, pulled down by the ebb tide.

Only the Time of the Times has no longer its time, which is the eternity itself, where space and time get together embracing the eternal existence, the entropy controlled by the Great Itself, He Himself and from Himself, who created the Primordial Word and the Primordial Thought and Love and Absolute and Truth and Hope, God. He, The Great Himself, who allows us to experience Happiness only in the Fata Morgana who is always moving away from us, precisely for determining us to find ourselves in death and in its salutary attribute, rebirth. Precisely for making us understand that we are not living and we shall Never be able to live the Time of the Times, because it can not be lived, can not be born, does not die, has no Time, it is the Eternity.

Without Birth and Death we could not have understood the Eternity in our souls.

And then we shall revive trying to find our salvation, trying to sip every tear from its

merciless eyes, the eyes of the Divine justice and there, on the threshold of eternity, we shall also understand the importance of birth and death. Many of us shall want to be born again, shouting in the abyss of the Universe: "Forgiveness, Forgiveness, Forgiveness, God!", but the hour was destined to us back when we were not born yet; and anything that goes beyond the threshold of death is not born again, except maybe under a different identity. Were there is no pain and suffering and weeping and upstartism and lie and secret, there is just our Ego, with good and bad, during our Life time. With love and curse, with wishes and meanness, with sin and unlawfulness. There, each of us should know that no one will pass our Styx back in order to start all over again.

We must know that we have an energy within us, depending on our deeds, which is placed on the stage destined by the deeds of each of us. Only there we shall know whether we are allowed to pass under the Times towards the Time of the Times and only then we shall understand how painful are the autumns and the rains and the societies and the births and the destinies and the deaths related to the Absolute. How late we recover sometimes or how few are those who actually do this, those who try to leave off the sin, breaking away from lie, slyness and upstartism, putting on the pure cloth of true charity, modesty and self sacrifice, first of all, dedicating all these to their fellow creatures, to those souls we share Time and clouds and rain and words with. To understand that self alienation represents us like an eternal subject of Times. And neither the rain, nor the chalk washed by it on the asphalt saves us in our soul, which is forever cloudy. And it keeps raining within Us, it is raining so hard within our soul and so leaded-hued are the clouds in us, and I am flying, flying, at great height over the clouds, over Ourselves, over the soul.

All that I wish is that someday I find my self.

We must believe in something, don't we? We are born with the guilt of existing, this guilt that is originated in the Genesis; I don't know to which of us is this so helpful, but I know that we have to save ourselves, little by little, from the eternal Primary Sin so that we can dedicate ourselves to life. Say life and you will say sin. Say birth and you will say sin. Say death and you will say ... peace. Isn't the joy of life consisting in committing sin by living intensively and then having a reason to regret it? In a word, some people consider that they are committing a sin by the fact that they were born in world of sin. Which person has never committed a sin? Which saint hasn't been a Human first?

Which love doesn't have a beginning?

Which flash will not die? Which blood will run eternally?

Which bride will never embrace the grave?

Which bird will never stop flying?

Which time will not pass?

Which sin will not be washed at least by tears of the clouds of some millennium forgotten by time and memory? Then, at least we should hear the great cry of the suffering of solar time, which lets us know that with each distant tick of a solar horologe, the great salvation is drawing near in death. How many galaxies lost by times can our eyes see while we are alive, how many waves do we hear hysterically breaking against the rocks of the shores, how many suppressed laughs or tears or pains of the deep suffering, deep as a well of endless pain from which we greedily take, thirsty by life, we shall never know!

All these for the sex of two creatures whom we shall have to be grateful for bringing us into the world, by loving them. Parents, parents of sin, who brought us into sin by committing a sin, in order to be thirsty at the well of life, in order to drink up the biblical glass of suffering, in order to soak our broken wings in its water, so that we

then try to fly towards death, not before leaving a few descendants to the same glass, descendants who will leave others and others and the glass will never get empty, so that the unborn would also moisten their lips in the biblical glass of suffering, in order to know in their life time what God is, why we need God, why we have to want to live and so on.

Thus, they will tell their descendants: "Drink from the water of life so that you live, because otherwise you will not feel the happiness of suffering"; otherwise this masochism, which is the history of humanity, would not have existed and neither the sadists who would coordinate the masochistic masses in the name of I don't know what ideal or hope towards the eternal better.

I am looking at the endless plain above which we are flying, Siberia. The place of exile for so many destinies, but also the place where many people found themselves freezing or cutting down trees from the endless forests, which buried in the cobweb of their branches so many sighs that are now in the stems on which resins are flowing out like some tears of the unforgotten sufferings.

The bodies of those who died are in the forest of stems where each tree has its story, the story of a Destiny coming from who knows what European or Asian village in order to create a history for the leaves that, anyway, die in autumn, mixing with the soil so that they start all over again the same history, the same time and, yet, a different one. How large Siberia is since I am flying above it! It is getting dark, the lights of the plain are flashing on the wing that vibrates from time to time, like the bodies of those from the labor camps in the cold of Siberia. Why are the wings vibrating?

The dusk brings a red horizon, making the wing vibrating look incandescent; it's the un-lighted and painful fire of the voiceless battle between day and night in which the wishes and loves of the dawn that will come with billions of dreams are born. Dreams with or without wings, with or without passions, with or without us, but always just dreams and nothing else, and then, again, destiny. I put the head phones over my ears. I am looking for a post with some music, something that I would like. No, I don't want the madness of rock, I want something slowly, poetical. At last I find something. I am trying to fall asleep. I close my eyes. Siberia, sledges, endless snow, bells in the harness of the horses, ice castles, old lordly houses with windows frozen in ice flowers and smokes vertically raising from chimneys hidden behind the towers of the houses, like some hidden, but extremely powerful feelings, just like ices that melt late in the spring, leaving behind colorful carpets of flowers, like words of love that never end, reminding of the ice castles melted in the cold and transparent sincerity of the cold in the whispers of love that pass over the endless spaces between seconds.

I open my eyes. It is night. The starry arch embraces the black dark of Siberia like a Greek who dances Sirtakis and grips sand in his hands, scatters it with his feet, eventually taking it in his hands and kissing it with his look in continuous love. And how many stories ended without time and started with eternity in the Siberian Sirtakis, in the eyes that lose their depth in each other, in the souls who reunited at the fires smoldering in the fireplaces, at the fires smoldering from the sap of those who have been killed. They were providing heat and hopes and dreams as in a last eternal dance of the starry arch with Siberia.

The solitary moon, large and alien, travels beside the aircraft without forgetting one single branch from the old endless forests. Up here, the moon is branchless. Down there it is not. Up here it is warm and down there it is frosty. Up here the words are spoken through maps, down there, they are spoken through feelings. And up here it is warm and down there it is frosty. An air hostess passes by my chair. She asks me, whispering, whether I need something. Just to sleep a little while. She smiles professionally and walks away a ghostlike as she came. I wish I could sleep. Something

bothers me. Could it be the Milky Way, which here, above Siberia, is more shiny than anywhere, or the Great Bear, or the thoughts that would leave me?

In Dallas, it was a wet and colder winter that year. So wet that you could feel the frost hostilely penetrating into your bones. It seemed like the rains wouldn't stop. I have known Irene for a few months. I'll never forget that morning when she received an envelope from Columbia University in New York, notifying her that she was offered a scholarship grant within the law faculty of the university. None of us could believe our eyes, although it was true. At that time, we were both studding in Dallas. I had met with difficulties but I succeeded to enroll at Texas University.

Irene hadn't told me anything about the steps she had taken in order to obtain this scholarship because she didn't hope in positive resolving of the situation and, anyway, she had taken all these steps several months ago before she met me. Then I found out. I admit that such an alternative caught me unawares. I didn't know what to expect, I didn't know whether to be glad or sad about it.

What if I won't be able to manage in New York?

What if this kind of success would estrange Irene from me, as I was poor back then, living from day to day, being unsure that I could find a job in New York for supporting myself? Irene broke new news about the scholarship she had been granted with a certain feeling of guilt. She has curled into my arms and we have stayed like that for a few minutes without saying a word. I could only feel her hastened breath and her heart beating. She took me by surprise. I didn't know what to tell her.

To strictly forbid her to leave for Columbia would have been a proof of egoism and wickedness.

To tell her that I agree to start on a way I've never been before and I didn't know where it leads me, would also place me on an abeyance position. I knew, I felt that she was fighting a cold, hidden, pitiless battle within her soul, between a thing she wanted so much and me.

Then I realized for the first time that Irene really loves me when she told me: "You know, Sorin, I don't necessarily have to accept this scholarship. After all, it is a simple offer and nothing more. I can take it or I can leave it. I will never set foot in New York without you. I gave a good thought, Sorin. I cannot leave you in Dallas and go to New York, to be apart from you. I'm staying!" In those moments I felt like screaming, I didn't know what to do. I was afraid of the unknown, of the fact that I might loose Irene, as couldn't offer her what she, probably, needed. Will she always love me as she does now? Will she ever change? In those moments I wished I could stop the time. I going through a crucial moment and I didn't know which way to go. Eventually I started to think following certain logic. I said to myself that, after all, Irene really loves me. I loved her too. I loved Irene very much. If I loved Irene that much as I said I did in my soul, that would mean that I should have left aside any feeling of egoism and the fear that was overruling me – that I might loose Irene – and to accept the idea that no sacrifice is too high when you love somebody. That even when you love, you must have the courage to face some stages of your love, like a fighter, like a ship that is not always sailing on calm waters.

Eventually I told Irene: "I will go with you to New York, Irene. I will follow you, for your good, till my dying day. Maybe we shall get married there, Irene." Then, although she was staying in my arms like a child, she turned around, hold me with both arms and said: "You know, Sorin, I suffer from schizophrenia; one day it might get worse. Will you have someone like me as your wife?" My answer was: "Yes! No one could ever break us apart!"

I remember it was a cooper-colored, shiny autumn when we arrived in New York. Grandparents were walking their grandchildren in Grant Central Park. The high

temperatures recorded during the summer withdrew somewhere in the South. I will never forget how embarrassed we felt in the crowded, fussing, tumultuous New York, as we were used to live in the quite and large areas of Dallas. Everything was new for us. We both experienced a kind of fear for the unknown. We were afraid that this particular dim unknown would break us apart.

The moment we stepped down from the greyhound and knew that we were in a basement on 42nd Street, where the intercity bus station was located, we both looked, at the same time, at huge electronic panel indicating the departures for the buses in New York. I know for sure that Irene, just like me, was looking for the departure time of the greyhound to Dallas. When our eyes met, I realized the awkwardness of the situation, so I bowed my head, ashamed. None of us could say a word to the other. And not because there was nothing to say or because we didn't want to talk to each other, but we just felt that anything we would have said was not enough. Another answer would have been necessary and another question and another answer and another question.

Finally I spoke to Irene, and the tone of my voice was hiding every bit of emotion, as is I would have told her: "Will you fetch me that jar, please?" I knew that however nervous I might have been, what I felt that moment could not be expressed in words, or in gestures. My thoughts were leading me to my next question: where were we going to sleep? Will we find a small place for us in this gigantic metropolis, where could we leave? I knew that we couldn't even afford the accommodation for one month with the amount we had, let alone eating. I told her:

"Are we in New York, Irene?" I don't know why I did it interrogatively. Of course I knew we were in New York. I needn't have asked her that. We both knew very well where we were although we were moving like robots towards the place where our luggage had to come. I don't remember how we took our bags; what I know for sure is that on the way out we saw a boulevard crowded with cars that were honking deafeningly, I know that it was getting dark and a black man offered to carry our luggage to a cab. I know for sure that we didn't feel like spending our last money on the cab, so we looked for a bus station. We were not used to traveling by subway back then. We finally found a bus but we took in the opposite direction. In stead of taking us to the northern part of Manhattan, it took us somewhere in Brooklyn. We only realized that when we crossed the Brooklyn bridge.

Then I asked a fellow whether the bus also reaches the northern part of Manhattan. I remember that the fellow hadn't answered, thinking that we are some druggies who want to make fun of him. The truth was that we looked quite wretched, let alone that we were so tired after about three days of traveling with the greyhound from Dallas to New York.

I repeated the question. Eventually a woman, about forty years old, answered us. I told her where we were coming from and where we were heading. We finally received the information we needed. We got off near a subway station. Once we got there, we were surprised to find out that anyone could pick up, for free, a map with of all subway lines in New York. At last we knew what train we were supposed to take in order to reach our destination. When we finally got to the gate of Columbia University, it was two o'clock in the morning, neither more or less.

The guards wouldn't let us in the campus at that time, not for anything. We both were exhausted. We learnt that, in order for us to have access into the campus, Irene had to fill in some formalities. We went to a little park near by, where we lay down on the fine grass, waiting for the dawn. As I was lying on my back looking at the sky, I understood that the starry arch of New York is not different from the one of Dallas. Irene told me:

"Can you see that there are the same stars here, as in Dallas? The sky must be with us, Sorin, and it is. It tells us to feel at home in this city"

"Is there anybody else with us, Irene?"

"Definitely, Sorin" she said.

"Who?" I asked her.

"God, of course"

"It is true, Irene. When you have God beside you, you feel like home, where you might be in this world. I remember when we went to California that month, you know, when we came from Los Angeles. Actually, we have lived in Las Vegas for almost one year. I had never been so far from my dear Texas, my native Texas. You know that God helped me a lot, especially because if I had not been in that greyhound, coming from Los Angeles that day, passing through El Paso, I wouldn't have met you, Irene."

"And if I had not been in Denver and I had not come back in Dallas, I also wouldn't have met you."

"Do you believe in hazard, in fate, Irene?"

"I do, Sorin."

"Do you believe that Somebody up There ... Look at that isolated star. Can you see it, Irene?" and I pointed to the respective star.

"Yes, Sorin, I can see it."

"Do you believe that that star also exists by chance, by hazard?"

"No, Sorin. That star was created by God with a precise purpose", said Irene.

"If that star was created by God and we are guiding ourselves by a star just like it, if each of us had our own star, a star of our destiny, do you still believe in hazard? Can you still believe that we met in that greyhound by chance? I can not believe that, Irene. I know that all everything in my life has a precise purpose.

We are not mere accomplishes of our own destiny, but we are more than that: the destiny itself. All that seems accidental is exactly the opposite.

We can not understand, we can not cover in our minds the connections that take place in nature so that the chance is no longer chance, but destiny. What do wish most in the world, Irene? Something that would become a kind of supreme goal in your life?"

I asked her while looking at the starry sky.

"What would I wish most in this world, a supreme goal of mine? I don't think that what you wish most in the world should necessarily become your goal, Sorin. A goal that you should necessarily accomplish. But why don't you, Sorin, try to guess what I wish most in this world?"

"To graduate from law in Columbia?"

"No, Sorin, you didn't guess right"

"How I wish I could enroll at faculty where I could study arts, the history of arts; I think that would be wonderful."

"I asked you to guess something, Sorin" said Irene, this time more roughly.

"Yes, Irene, I'm trying to think of what you would wish most in this world and nothing crosses my mind" I answered.

"A man who pretends to love another person very much should know what his partner wishes most."

"I do love you, Irene. I feel ashamed for being so stupid that I can not guess what you wish most. To be a very rich woman" I said.

"This time we are much farther from the subject"

"Wouldn't like to have a few billions of dollars in your money box?"

"No, Sorin, and I think that those billions would also make me happy. I don't know why, but I always thought that the fortune, if it is too high, does not mean happiness for its owner, but rather a handicap. At some point, money is outlining your life,

conquering it, turning you into a veritable slave of money. To me, Sorin, becoming rich is not an ideal. I hate to view the world in that manner and, moreover, to drive in a limousine, being high in my nose and self-conceited. That's the way you see me, Sorin?"

"No, Irene. Of course not. I said it just like that; it was just an idea. Maybe in order to start a conversation in which I could understand what is it you wish most, Irene. Maybe you would like to be very intelligent. To be a genius in a certain domain."

"No, Sorin, now you are really talking nonsense. Haven't you understood that however intelligent you might be, however great genius you might be, you are still nothing. The more intelligent you are, the more you realize that you have much more to study. And the more you study, the more you realize that you actually have much more to learn than you thought at the beginning, so this would not be what I want most."

"Ok, Irene. I give up. You won. Will you tell me what you want most?"

"Yes, Sorin, I will, on condition ..."

"On condition ...? I get it." I bent over her, I kissed her for a few minutes and then she said:

"That's better, Sorin, now I will tell you. Two years ago I paid a visit to a sister of my mother's who lives in Australia. I was in Melbourne. I visited a Mall in that city. It was somewhere in the center. I couldn't understand how was it that there was a historical tower that once represented the architectonical beauty and greatness in Melbourne, and now, just like a helpless old man who was helped by a young man to cross the street, was protected by the generous arm of the Mall whose ceiling was protecting him against bad weather, that is the rain, the wind, absolutely everything that might have destroyed it, keeping it next to the products exhibited for sale, like a trophy. It seemed like the Mall would keep telling him: 'Well, you see, old general? It is me, a mere corporal, commercial in deed, who has you on a string!' There, in that Mall, I had my second nervous breakdown. They took me with an ambulance to a clinic in Melbourne. After two weeks, I recovered a little and I went home.

My aunt joined me from Melbourne to Dallas. Do you know what exactly was it that I couldn't stand in the Mall? The fact that, not long ago, that tower didn't need the 'generous' arm of the Mall or its roof. Once, the old general was freely looking up at the sky, not from the angle of that Mall's roof. Once, the South Star was sparkling above its forehead, just like a destiny star sparkles above some great men.

I still remember my mother's face when I got to Dallas. She was mad with fury seeing me home again, after less than one month in Australia. She wished I had stayed there for the summer, during my vacation. She was happy she had got rid of me at least for three or four months and now she couldn't believe I came back. She was so furious that, for one moment I thought she would beat me. My aunt told her what had happened in Melbourne. Do you know what my mother said?

"She is playing the fool, this little wretch. I assure you that she is fine. Why didn't keep her in that mental hospital in Melbourne? Why did you bring her to Dallas? Look! She all right now. You, my family, have always been against me, I am a victim of yours' my mother shouted, blaming her sister and me for who knows what imaginary reason.

Maybe I needed more quite in those moments, because I had just gone through a serious depression crisis, which, as the doctors said, had been the cause of my schizophrenia. I told my mother:

"You are right, mother, I'm OK. I was just sad because the South Star was not reflecting against the general's forehead, the Tower in the Mall, but against the corporal's arm, the roof of the Mall." Do you know what she told me, Sorin?

"What stars, you wretch? Instead of thinking about earthly things, like a job, to be

able to earn a penny, you are thinking about stars? Listen to you, you crazy girl! The South Star! You are not allowed to think about stars, do you hear me!?"

She was yelling and she started to pull me by the hair, although my aunt was trying to help me. Then I got into another crisis, the third and the most serious one. I lost myself then and I came to my senses only after several months, in Crystal Medical Center, from the metropolitan area of Dallas. I was hospitalized in doctor Kaufmann's section. He was the head of the section and I was taken care of by two young doctors who were very nice. I understood all these after I had begun to come to consciousness again. They both spent long hours of their free time for offering me different psychotherapy sessions or tests that would help me recover. Now, Sorin, what do you think I wish most in my life?"

"You wish the South Star to sparkle on the general's forehead", I answered, looking at the starry sky.

"Maybe this too. But more, what exactly do you think I could wish?" Irene asked, almost whispering.

"I don't think I will ever find out more than that, Irene" I answered her while zipping up my overcoat as I was very cold since that night of early October, in New York.

"Can you see that solitary star, Sorin?"

"The star we looked at when talking about destiny and chance?"

"Yes, Sorin. That star precisely."

"I can see it, Irene."

"All I wish is for that star not to disappear from the sky, ever. I wish it would always guide my destiny, which is not just chance, but a destiny created by God, just like the destiny of that star, which has proved us this night, when we have no place to sleep, that we are before Providence, that It gave us the love that we take to our own Golgotha, to the end. May this little star of ours always sparkle" said Irene in a serious, but whispered voice.

"May God hear you, Irene" I told her, looking at the little star that we would consider our star from that moment on. However, I couldn't help but ask her:

"And, yet, why did you choose this star, Irene?"

"Because it brings us together, my dear Sorin. Now you see?" She told me that in a tone that I found pathetic.

"Yes." I answered, in my mind or maybe aloud, anyway it doesn't matter anymore. All that, in my opinion, I ever worth doing in my life, was to see that solitary star, which I don't even know what star is, nor what constellation it belongs to. All that mattered was that I found myself, as a soul, for the first time, in an early autumn night. I have Irene to thank to for all these, as she chose a star that was uniting our souls. Well, this star was what Irene wanted most in her life.

This solitary, maybe shy star, somewhere in a corner of the Universe, a star that was continuously sending its pale and yet persistent light into our souls that were tired of the greyhound. I don't even know how I fell asleep. All that I learned the next morning was that our bags had disappeared as well as our shoes that we had put next to the bags so that we feel more comfortable on the grass. We were barefooted. We had no money and, even worse, no certificates. I'll never forget that morning when I woke up. We could not believe that we had been robbed. We had the impression that we were living a nightmare, a dream and that soon the day would break and we would wake up. The first to talk about it was Irene:

"Am I dreaming, Sorin? Are you here, in flesh and blood? Did they really steal everything we had? What are we going to do, my dear Sorin?"

I felt the same way, that I was dreaming, that everything that was happening to us

could not possibly be real. I was as desperate as Irene. I had no idea how would we manage in such a large city as New York. I was, in a word, what it's called terrified. I didn't even know what to answer my dear Irene.

I definitively didn't want her to know how I felt. I was probably more depressed than she was. Suddenly, I had the idea of not letting her know of the truly tragic situation we were in, without realizing that, in fact, I was only making it worse. So I told Irene:

"Yes. It is true, Irene. You are dreaming, this is not the reality. You sleep on until you wake up." In that moment, Irene laid her head on the grass and closed her eyes. Then I realized my mistake. Irene didn't know that, in fact, she was living in the reality. So harsh, monstrous, bitter as it was, but it was the reality and we had to accept it. I could not see, behind all these, Irene's nervous disease, that wretch schizophrenia that would still her from me, one day. And I, who didn't have such a diagnosis, felt like screaming, breaking something up and, had these possibilities not existed, I also accepted that it was all just a bad dream. Even though I knew it was like that, even though I was aware of the reality. All I had to do was to make Irene realize too, without provoking a crisis, that what we were living there was nothing but the pure, merciless reality. I knew that the most difficult thing for me to do, in those moments, was to inoculate my sweetheart the reality we lived. I sincerely admit that I took me some time to convince Irene that we were barefooted, that our bags were gone and, worse of all, that we had no money or certificates. The fellows that had "sapped" while we slept did it so well that they made sure they took everything from us, leaving us in blue jeans and shirts only. Maybe it would have been better if that night, with Irene's star that unites us, had been colder; perhaps we would have put our coats on and we would have had it now. I remember Irene told me later:

"Let's go to Columbia. What do you think, Sorin?"

"I agree, Irene." However, I didn't really know what exactly we could do there, without our papers. But, in certain cases, any initiative or action is welcome. I knew this from other difficult situations I had lived. However much stress you might be under when you are doing something, it feels that it is not that deep because you are concentrating on the action itself, on what you are doing.

The fact of going to Columbia barefooted and without any papers was by all means a positive thing, a sign of courage. We were walking hand in hand concentrating on avoiding little stones or even pieces of glass that could injure our soles. But sometimes we stepped on some sharp little stone, which made us sigh when the cutting stone met our soles. Later I told Irene:

"Well, what do you say, my love? Wouldn't you like us to have a billion dollars each, in this moment?" I said these words in an ironical voice, in a specter of what I intended to be a joke of mine. Then, when we were so desperate, I was asking Irene whether she wanted or not to be a billionaire. Her answer to my joke, which proved to be in bad taste, was as peremptory as possible:

"No!"

She said this "no" in a very natural voice, so that she gave me the impression that we were at a plentiful table, with candles and a fireplace that was burning and heating out feet, while we were looking at each other with rapture, drinking a glass of champagne.

Chapter 4

Now, after so many years, when although I own a fortune of over eight hundred million dollars, I travel by plane at the third class, I feel the need to sleep, like an ordinary vagabond, on a chair in the airport and I am so much happier when I can communicate with people not as a magnate who in the arts business, but as a human being. Only now I understand what Irene meant a few years ago. Being rich doesn't make me happy. One day, I will donate all my money to an organization for poor people. I hate luxurious limousines, cold and impersonal, waiting for you at one airport or another, submissive, like some proud slaves, gladiators who are proud and arrogant, shouting: "Nothing is valuable to us, neither the pain, nor blood."

All that matters is the money, the king of the kings. We can always buy destinies and life and death. There is only one thing that money can not buy: sincere Love! But this is something obsolete, something out-of-date for us, the gladiators, fighting fearlessly and courageously on the scenes of markets and international transactions. That's why I hate limousines.

Even though the old woman from Shiphall airport in Amsterdam was getting on my nerves at the beginning, she is so much like me. That night I left a truly exorbitant room, in the most expensive five star hotel from Amsterdam. Why? In order to sit stiff on one of the armchairs of the airport, like a man who had no place to sleep and could not afford to rent a room at the most dirty motel in Netherlands. After I had concluded the negotiations for the purchasing of a Rembrandt, I took a taxi and I visited the city. It had been wondering through Amsterdam for more than a few hours and I didn't want to get back to the hotel. I felt so strange, so worried. I realized that in a city from the United States I would have felt as strange as do here. It was not an alienation of "far away from home", or of language or habits or different things, aspects that I was not used to. It was an alienation of richness, of luxury, of everything that seemed impersonal to me, or too professional, lacking intimate value.

I think that this is the essence of what I felt: lack of intimate value. However much beautified it might have been by luxury, richness, professionalism, faultlessly, of high qualification and class, I needed something else. I needed somebody who would make mistakes when I'm around, who would not see me as the object of his work or the flake of snow that melts if not properly treated and thus he would lose a precious client.

When I called the reception and I told them I wanted a plain ticket to Australia, at the tourist class, they brought me, after one hour, a first class ticket. When I told them that I had not made a mistake and I wanted a ticket at the tourist class, they offered me that ticket on the part of the hotel, absolutely free. I got nervous and I left the hotel.

They could not understand that I really wanted a third class ticket. They could not accept that their client would fly at the tourist class. I could not stand the prejudices, the xenophobia and impersonality that serve them. It is true that we will never be able to chase the prejudice away from the people's consciousness. The prejudice is one of the main actors of the great edifice called civilization. It is the dynamo that fed the flame of competition. It's a feeling that classifies the soul that maintains it, on a certain axiological stage under which more and more inferior things will always exist, things that, by their inferiority, will never reach the level of that soul.

Because of this wretched actor that is the prejudice, beside a worried civilization who's mainly substantiated on the Absurd, there is the whole range of social reflections of the Prejudice, such as: racialism, ranks, from the nobiliary ones to those given by the power of the money, social classes and absolutely everything that leads to a separation,

division of certain stages recognized by the society. I wonder if a civilization could exist without Prejudice.

Just in the form we know it. I doubt it. It should be a civilization in which the main pawn, the man, as a being that created it, would not be a foreigner to himself, would not be the exponent of the alienation, wherever this might be produced, either in industrialization, culture, ecological environment, to the newest and less perfect forms as clonation.

The clonation itself is also a result of Prejudice and, why not, in the last analysis, of the type of civilization that we created. Starting with the architectonical models and trends of the constructions, either they are palaces or sky scrapers, to architectonical models and constructions in philosophy or technology, all of them, absolutely all of them, are due, at last, to Prejudice. We'll never be able to talk about civilization without uttering: Prejudice.

The great question is whether the human being, which reached a certain development stage, will eventually succeed to defeat Prejudice, so that it can find itself. Is Prejudice rather a prerogative of education? I mean does education determine the degree of civilization? No way! I know that many people consider that education lays at the basis of the civilization, of the level it reached.

We learn in school that one prejudice or another is wrong, but will we really, practically apply this? When we are in the street and see that the humans that make up the society are included in a social, geo-political, cultural, environmental or ecological system that incite us to accept the prejudice as something we can not live without, we know that we'll never be able to completely standardize the society because, if we do so, the entire arsenal of values would collapse and the result would also be a disaster. It was very obvious what the standardization led to in the communism. Not to the disappearance of the Prejudice any way, but to the changing of its color and shade. The only weapon in the fight against Prejudice is to accept it as it is, to let soul nibbled by its merciless incisors till the day when we will all realize what it means to become a real stranger to yourself, to wish for intimacy, personalization in spite of the powerful depersonalization brought by Prejudice. That is why I am flying with the tourist class. We finally left behind the Cerberus gate from Columbia, which last night was closed and well guarded. This time nobody addressed us because we mingled in a group of students.

I don't know why, but once in the campus we both felt relieved. I know that some eyes were looking at our feet, but, under those circumstances, we couldn't care less about the fact that we were barefooted.

We went to the secretariat. When Irene told them that she has no papers because they had been stolen the previous night, the secretary, a woman who was about fifty years old, tall but thin, like a mare that had been lost for a few weeks in the desert, with flat breasts and swarthy face, advised us, in a very hysterical manner to address the dean.

I'll never forget how awkward the situation was that day, from the moment we entered the dean's office, barefooted. Nobody had noticed that in the secretariat, because there was a desk, but in the dean's office, where we alone, face to face with him, it would be very obvious.

Finally, the dean's office door opens. A luxurious cabinet was shown in front of us, with époque furniture. At his desk, the dean, a man who was probably sixty years old, with a peevish face of English nobleman who hadn't drunk any tea for a week, because we disturbed him. He looked us up and down and, when he noticed we were barefooted, he put a pair of glasses on his nose, thinking that maybe he hadn't seen our feet well enough. Irene was the one who told him what had happened to us and why we

were in his office. The man was breathing like a locomotive going up a hill. I'll never forget his gracious words:

"How bold of you, young lady, to enter my office like that! What exactly do you want? Do you want me to give you papers? You will have to address the police for that and then you come here to fill in the enrollment forms. Don't forget, said the wretched, with an air of ironic happiness in his voice, you have three more days. If your papers are not in order within three days, with the formalities at the university filled in, you can consider yourself out, young lady!"

He deliberately stressed out these last two words.

"You're telling me!" he said then. "How insolent of her to come to me, to solve her problems. I am not a sister of charity, did I made myself clear, Anderson?" he told Irene.

It looked like I didn't even exist for that crazy dean. If until then we sort of trusted we could manage, this time we felt absolutely helpless. We had no money at all, not even for a subway ticket. I don't know how we left the building and sat on the grass, in the large yard of the campus of Columbia University.

What I liked about that yard was that it was situated on a kind of slope; actually, the whole campus was on a slope of a hill.

"What are we going to do now?" Irene asked, without revealing any trace of excitement in her voice.

I didn't answer her. I was looking at the crowd of students walking around in the area. We have been standing there without saying a word for more than one hour.

"Well, Irene, what do you say now? How do you find New York?" I asked her, trying to cheer up the situation a little bit.

"A first-class city" she answered, ironically.

"What do mean? Be more explicit, my dear."

"It is the city and the situation that I wanted most in life, my dear Sorin."

"I suppose you don't regret being here."

"Not at all. It was my wish, Sorin, wasn't it?"

When she said the last word she burst into tears. She was sobbing, like a child who had lost his favorite toy. She told me, sobbing:

"I am sorry, Sorin, for dragging you into this mess.

Do you think I knew what would happen? Do you think that I don't feel like I going crazy? Oh, I do, Sorin."

Seeing her cry, I took her in my arms, trying to calm her down. I couldn't tell her anything. Actually, I don't even know whether in that moment I should have said something. A small group of students gather around us, probably because they heard Irene's sobs and they were looking at us with curiosity. A young woman with fair, long hair, fastened in a queue and blue eyes came closer.

"My name is Linda and I study law. Can I help you?"

Hearing these magic words, "can I help you", I thought that one of the Archangels himself came from heavens, at Irene's weep.

We told her the whole story we went through. She said she had a one bedroom flat, somewhere in Manhattan and that she is inviting us to stay there for a few days, until we come round again. On that day we also filed a statement to the police with regard to the incident that had taken place a night before and, thus, we received some temporary identity cards, until the whole case was to be clarified.

Maybe I'll never be quits with Linda. We have lived at her place for about three months and she never asked us to pay for anything. Then we rented a two bedroom apartment in Brooklyn. Our luck came with Linda. Irene succeeded to clarify her enrollment forms the next day and I found a great job. I never dreamed of finding such

a good job. I was a clerk at Waldorf Astoria Hotel in Manhattan.

To be more specific, I was carrying the clients' luggage to their rooms. The wages was poor but the tip was more than satisfactory.

Every time I carried a client's luggage I received five dollars or, sometimes, even more, as a tip. Imagine that I was doing it tens of times, sometimes more than one hundred times a day.

After two weeks I enrolled to a faculty of art history. Of course, I didn't receive a scholarship but I had the possibility not only to continue my studies, but also to ensure a certain standard of life for Irene. Poor Linda, she brought us luck. All I can say is that I always believed in luck, in what it is called chance. Some of us are lucky, other are not. But we are all born empty and we die like that too.

Linda never lived to see us accomplished. She died in a stupid car accident, in a February morning. It had snowed a lot in New York that year. Although you could see machines that were clearing the snow on all the large boulevards, there were a few areas with ice. She was probably in a hurry because she driving very fast when she had to hit the breaks on such an area. She bumped into a parapet on the highway. She didn't make to the hospital; she died on the way there.

That was her fate. She was in the wrong place, at the wrong time. If she hadn't been forced to brake suddenly, Linda would have definitively had another destiny. Her father took her ashes from the crematory, because her mother had died.

The destiny of each star, of each person, of each object is written under the sign of chance, somewhere in the cosmic annals of the Universe. Annals that guide him in a very un-accidentally way. I would walk with Irene in Manhattan, where Linda's apartment was, better said her one room flat.

We were both looking up to the second floor of that house with neoclassic architecture, most probably build in the thirties. We knew that, paradoxically, that building has changed our destiny. That maybe thanks to that building we were together and, why shouldn't we admit it, we had such a nice boy who was born after less than one year from that day when we had been robbed. It is strange when you think that the house killed Linda and gave Irene a boy, in exchange.

That one room flat in Manhattan helped us retrieve our losses, Irene's and mine, that's for sure. Those few months we lived there have been decisive in our lives, in our destinies. And after I graduated from the faculty of art history I was still looking up to that one bedroom flat of Linda's, almost every day, with pleasure.

It was also the chance that helped me get my first job as an expert in classic art pieces, at Lincoln Center. Well, what do you think was across Lincoln Center? Linda's house. And I'm thinking again at that solitary star I was watching with Irene when we had nowhere to sleep and we spent the night in the park. I'm thinking about our destiny and about the destiny of that star. I could say that we both achieved what we wanted.

Irene graduated from law and was on probation at a famous layer cabinet in New York. Then she opened her own cabinet. I was getting on pretty well myself with the expertise of art pieces so that, after three months, I quitted my job at the Lincoln Center and started a business on my own. I was, and still am, doing transactions with these art pieces, a business that had brought me large amounts of money. Mark, our little boy, was growing up every day. In short, we were a happy family. We got used to living in Brooklyn and we even started to love it; it began an integral part of our lives, which we could not leave for the world.

That is why we didn't buy properties in Manhattan or Long Island, where usually rich people retire, but in Brooklyn. It is true that in the northern part of Brooklyn, at the border with Queens, but evidently in Brooklyn.

The place where I can honestly assert that mine and Mark's home remained. I

cannot say anything about Irene, because when I thought that our lives had taken a normal, promising course, when I thought that nothing and no body can put up against our happiness, the deception also appeared.

One night she had a terrible attack. She started to cry and to run her head against the walls. She shouted that she was hunted by aliens and that they were flooding the Earth. I thought that it was a crisis like any other she had told me about.

I tried as much as I could to calm her down. How was I supposed to know that starting that winter evening, when it was snowing with large and thick flakes on New York, our lives would break apart, their destiny would change, tumbling down all our ambitions like a castle build of playing cards? I called the ambulance. I can still remember a bold, short and fat doctor asking me about aspects of Irene's life. I told him that she had had some breakdowns in the past but that one was the first since I met her. I knew about schizophrenia only from what she had told me. I confess I was not in the mood for chatting with the bold fellow while my wife was sedated and got into the ambulance. After three month of hospitalization at a clinic from New York, I took her to a sanatorium near Miami, in Florida. Sanatorium where she still is today, after more than ten years, without recognizing me. From that day, I raised my kid alone, trying to be not only a father to his, but a mother as well. Of course, as much as I tried to fulfill the qualities of a mother, I couldn't do it perfectly.

Even though Mark never said that he missed his mother, that he would have liked her to be there with us, I knew that he was doing this out of pride. There was a time when he would communicate less and less with me, in spite of the fact that I was doing my best to stop this decline, even though I was aware that there was only one person who could do it: Irene.

Frankly, I didn't expect any answers; I didn't hope for the impossible to happen and I didn't believe in fate. One morning, Dr. Morrison calls me from the sanatorium. I happened to be at home, because, at that time, I would normally run on the sports ground near by. It was raining that day. I think it had been less than one month since I visited Irene. So, Morrison, a bold, short guy with a huge belly that he carries like some kind of talisman, probably thinking that it brings him luck.

I even wandered whether this guy shouldn't have been put in hospital as a patient at the sanatorium that he ran. He had the strangest tics. He tapped his right ear or he squeezed his nose, or other similar tics that, together with a semi-absent-minded look, made you take him for a patient. His sole salvation was the white smock with the gigantic badge hung on his chest with a metallic little chain. So Morrison was on the phone. The guy seemed to be in a pretty good mood.

"Hello, I would like to speak to Mr. Sorin..."

"Speaking"

"How do you do, Sorin. I'm Morrison."

"Which Morrison?"

"What do mean which Morrison? The doctor from the sanatorium where your wife is hospitalized."

"Oh, yes, I remember. I apologize, Dr. Morrison."

"Leave it. I called to let you know that she told me she would like to be your attorney. Ha, ha", Morrison simpered on the phone. "I mean, you understand what kind of attorney."

"I understand", I answered, although I felt like cursing him, or hanging up for that simpler.

"So, dear sir, please send me a petition to express your agreement that you want to be represented by her in the divorce. I advise to send it as soon as possible. It might be good for her."

"What do you mean, doctor?"

"Well, don't you see it? She feels she can be useful in her consciousness."

"Do you think so?" I asked.

"Of course I think so. Starting from such a frame of mind, she can re-gain some feelings and from there ..."

"From there ..., doctor?"

"From there she might ..."

"... recover, doctor?"

"I don't know. I'm afraid to make such prognostication."

"Would to God it were so, doctor!"

"Send us the petition as soon as possible. In her disease, any feeling is gold, sir, pure gold!"

"I'll send it by mail today, doctor, and may we have only good news in the future!"

"Of course, Sorin."

What I was trying to hope for, with fear, Morrison was thinking of too. I was afraid of failure, of the disease itself. Can feelings really chase away the raving, that demon of the disease, which was stuck in the body of this woman? Who knows ... Anything is possible. That morning I set about writing this note:

"I, the undersigned, ..." this and that, the date, locality, and then: "...wish to be represented by Irene ..." and so on, "...attorney, in the divorce procedures with ..." this is the critical moment! First, I had decided to use her real first name, but not her surname, and eventually, after having completed the text, I wrote her real surname too. How I wished I found out as soon as possible whether her first name and surname, seen on such a petition, real, would have any echo in Irene's mind.

The content of the petition was simple: "I would like the divorce because my wife is mentally alienated, she suffers from paranoiac schizophrenia and we have been separated for more than ten years, which is not pleasant at all for a man who is in the vigor of life."

Three days later, Morrison calls me.

"Sorin Cerin?"

"Speaking."

"Mrs. counsel is here in my office and she would like to ask you a few questions if that's OK with you."

"Of course, doctor."

"OK, then I'll put her on."

"Hello, hello. It was Irene's voice, the voice I knew, unchanged."

"Yes", I answered.

"Mr. Cerin..."

"Yes, speaking."

"I am your counsel in your divorce procedure with Irene ..."

"Yes, I know. I'm listening."

On that moment I was hoping for a divine miracle to happen, I was hoping she would tell me she didn't want the divorce, as she would have done if she were healthy. I was hoping she would tell me: "Hey, Sorin, did you lost your mind? Why do you want to divorce, man?" But her voice was cold:

"I think you will be successful in your action and you will get to keep the child, so you will have your son too."

"The child too" I repeated, trying to restrain the tears that were falling down my face into the receiver.

"Yes, the child too" Irene repeated; then I heard the bas voice of poor Morrison who was almost as disappointed as I was. Finally, I told him:

"What if I came there with my son, doctor? Maybe this way she would have a starting. This divorce procedure thing is a beginning and however frail and false this beginning might be, it exists, Dr. Morrison, what do you say? The fact that she acknowledges her identity as a lawyer is a step ahead, a huge step, because this is her real identity, what do you say, doctor?"

"Yes, Sorin, it is a step ahead, but to cover a few kilometers you need to take many steps, whether you take then running or not."

"That's right, doctor, and we shall run."

The next day I went to the opposite part of New York, in Bronx. I live in Brooklyn. My son goes to college in Bronx. I found Mark at the school. When he saw me on the long, interminable halls, he couldn't believe it was me. Mark, my son, a fifteen years old, tall, brown-haired young man, wearing a blue with the inscription STOP.

"What brings you by, daddy?"

"A hurricane, this time!"

"Well, then it must be something serious."

"It is, Mark. I would like you and me to go together to Miami."

"Miami? Why there?" he asked me as if he hadn't known anybody there.

"To see your mother."

"Oh, no, daddy."

"Why not?"

"You know I hate to go there."

"But you haven't gone there for many years; you were only five years old when you went there last time."

"No, please, don't make me go there."

"Why, Mark?"

"Why should I? She's my mother anyway and I hate it that she is there, it affects me and then, you know very well that there is nothing they can do in her case. There is no cure yet. I would go there and she would look at me like I am a stranger; she will never recover anyway."

"Do you really think so, Mark?"

"I'm sure, daddy."

"Well, the point is that this time there is chance."

"Daddy, you had better tried not to run a wild-goose chase and to think of anything else."

"How can I think of anything else when Dr. Morrison himself told me that you should come, that there is this time? Just a chance, Mark, and yet it's something so big!"

"I don't really believe in such chances, daddy. And then, didn't you say once that Morrison himself should be hospitalized in that mental hospital?"

"Mark, I'm your father, I'm your legal tutor and this time you will do what I say. I'll take you there by force if you don't go on your own will."

"No, daddy! Mark told me and he slid off"

"Wait, Mark, do you hear me?"

The boy was running along the endless halls. I was following him. When I got to the exit door, he was gone. I think that I would have slapped him if I had caught him then.

I remember that on my way home, when I was driving towards the highway, I hit an idiot's car on the right side. It was just a little scratch and I had to write thousands of declarations and tests to the traffic policemen. All in all, including the fine, it cost me one thousand US dollars. On top of it all, the traffic police officer told me:

"You came off with a small loss, Sorin. The fine was very low because it was raining. You are lucky it is winter time in America and what you paid to the guy with car it's your agreement, because you destroyed it. People should pay their insurance up to date."

"You are perfectly right, I told him through clenched teeth, and then I closed the door and started off, thinking of how I could thank Mark for what he did for me on that day. I arrived home, I unwound the phone robot. No trace of Mark. Eventually I decided to leave by myself the next morning and to declare war to Mark, for a period of at least five years for what he had done."

The next morning, when I was walking to the car that I had left in front of the garage, Mark was waiting, leaning on the curb of the access way to the garage.

"Well, look who's here!" I tried to strike up a conversation.

"I came, I don't know why" said Mark.

"Ger in, Mark" I told him, after I opened the door with the electronic distant control from my pocket. We both knew that we would arrive in Miami the next morning. On the way there I explained Mark why I believed we had a chance, why I hoped that a miracle would take place eventually.

Mark refused to believe in miracles, only because their un-accomplishment would have been the more painful for him the surer he was that it would come true.

He asked me whether his mother loved him when he was a child, what was their relationship when she was healthy, whether she used to take care of him. I explained him how much she loved him, how she used to take him to the Grant Central Park in New York, how she used to hold him. How happy she was at the maternity when she heard she had a boy, how she would nurse him, play with him, help him take his first steps. In Philadelphia it had been raining during the day and now it was snowing with large flakes, that were melting when reaching the wet ground, whitening, here and there, the branches of the trees. Eventually, late at night, we arrived in Miami. I still remember, it was late January, in full American winter.

We checked in a hotel near the railway station in Miami. I was exhausted. I fell asleep instantaneously and I woke up late the next day. I had driven from New York to Miami with short brakes in gas stations or in some fast-foods where I eat something in a hurry and hit the road again. I suppose we wouldn't have woken up if a chambermaid hadn't knocked to our door, asking whether we intended to book the room for the next day because the hotel day ended at twelve o'clock and we were still sleeping at eleven forty-five.

"Yes", I replied. "We are leaving in a few minutes."

I don't know why, but that railway station in Miami seemed very large to me, a gigantic palace, austere, with many pillars and sad stone. Well, it's the subjective sensation of each of us.

On the other hand, on one side of the station, there was a real market place with stalls and taverns, just in the East where you can drink a beer in the street or in front of the station, or you can watch a sexy show with beautiful women who invite you anytime to more, but behind the curtains, because prostitution is forbidden in Florida. We finally arrived to the sanatorium. At the entrance, Mark had a small hesitation, but, eventually, he followed me like a child. The stretcher bearer, dressed in white, opened the metallic door behind which Irene was.

"She has been sedated, sir, you can be relaxed", said the stretcher bearer, waiting for me to thrust a banknote into the large pockets of the white jacket.

"OK, thank you" and I thrust a fifty dollar banknote into his pocket, so that would be, so to speak, more careful with Irene. The door closed behind us. At last, there we were, all three of us, the whole family. Me, Mark and Irene in a madhouse room. "What

a view had fate in store for us!" I thought then. Irene was lying, with her eyes looking at the ceiling, without saying anything, without looking at us. Mark was staring at her in a strange way, with love at the same time; the law of blood.

"Irene!" I said, almost whispering. "Irene!" I repeated, this time more firmly.

No answer.

"Mom!" said Mark, almost shouting.

Only then she turned her eyes towards us. She was looking at us as if it had been normal for us to be there, as if we had been part of the furniture, which was as cold and intangible as always.

"Mom!" Mark repeated. "It's me, Mark, your son. I do recognize me, you must recognize me" he said while walking near her bed and sitting on the edge.

Finally, Irene said in a whisper:

"What brings you by, gentlemen?"

"What brings us by?" Mark said. "What brings us by? You are my mother and I am your son. I am Mark, your son. Do you understand that? ..."

"I have no son, no son", Irene said.

"Yes you do, mom, don't you recognize me?" Mark tried one last time, with tears in his eyes. "Can't you really recognize me?"

"I am counsel Irene ... I have no children, I had no husband, I'm a free person, free as a bird."

"That is right" I said. "You are the attorney that agreed to accept my divorce case" I said, confused by the fact that she didn't have any starting in the presence of Mark either. Although I was disappointed I decided to keep on fighting, however difficult it might have been.

"Oh, yes, you are the one with the divorce case?"

"Yes, the divorce, and I came with my son, maybe you need to talk to him."

"So, this young man is your son?"

"Yes, he is my son."

"What's your name, young man?" Irene asked with a professional smile.

"Mark", said the boy, with tears in his eyes, looking at me. On that moment, I made him a sign to be a man, as we promised each other when we had been in the car, on the way there.

"Mark?" said Irene.

"Yes" he answered.

"You seem to be a little upset, young man. Aren't you?"

"A little" said Mark, trying hard to put a smile on his face.

"Why? Don't you agree with the divorce?"

"Yes and no" I interferred.

"Does this mean that he loves his mother? Do you love her, Mark? Tell me?" said Irene.

He looked into my eyes, trying to find an answer. On that moment, I admit, I didn't know what to answer her either. If I had told her that he loved her, Irene could have refuse to take the case and if I had told her that he didn't, I would have probably hurt Mark who, no matter what, loved his mother.

Finally, Mark said:

"But does she love me?"

I found this way of answering by asking a question brilliant, on that moment. I knew that any question has an answer, so Irene had to answer him this time. After all, she was his mother.

"How am I supposed to know whether that woman loves you, young man?"

"But if you were her, counsel, would you love your son?" asked Mark.

"If I would love my son? What a question! Of course I would. How I wish I had a son and how sorry I am that I don't have a child!"

"But ..." said Mark.

"I suggest I described you certain moments in her life, with Mark. OK? Maybe it would help you understand better their relationship."

"OK", said Irene.

I was content that this time it was me who succeeded to close Mark's 'but', which could have been the antecedent of an idealistic disaster in Irene's mind, if it had been followed by a sentence like: "But you do have a son!"

I am contemplating the dawns that conquer the peaks of the gigantic mountains in Pakistan.

The dark flows, like a shadow of the past, into the mysterious valleys, where the white of the snow is hidden almost for ever, like feeling that you can never utter because your wretched fate itself wouldn't allow it, because you were born to be the slave of your own moments that you live, trying all your life to run away from time, from yourself, from your own destiny.

The plain throbs from time to time, like a child who finally fell asleep after having cried terribly. An air attendance is walking through the chairs, observing the passengers. When she comes near me, she asks whether I want something. I shook my head. I don't know why but on that moment I said in a whisper: 'Silence'. I thought that the word it was heard just by me. No. The air hostess also heard me, so she asked me:

"What do you want, sir?"

"Nothing" I replied.

"Maybe you would like to have something to eat or to drink?"

"No, absolutely not."

The she walks away smiling professionally. I want silence, silence, silence, silence.... That's all I want. How can you turn a cascade into a still lake, in which the clouds and the first stars of the darkness would reflect? How can you change the past and the memories and the moments you embraced since you were born, discovering, little by little, a reality that was meant for you and that you had to hold like you hold a sweetheart you are dancing a famous tango with, an endless dance with torrents of sweat on your face, with a rhythm that grows more and more infernal and passional at the same time, a dance of life and death, of to be or not to be, of love and hate, of licentiousness, of madness.

Suddenly, silence. I look my sweetheart into her eyes. I looked into the eyes of reality. I look into my eyes. I wish I continued the infernal, mad, alienated dance with my own reality, in spite of the fact the sweat is running down on me, in spite of the fact that my whole body aches terribly and my feet are bleeding and red tracks of my blood colors the scene of life I'm dancing on, in spite of the fact that I can no longer have the strength to dance, to move even a toe, I want to dance the alienate dance of reality, at least mentally, even if I collapse on the scene and there is nobody around my and the scene is red with my blood wasted for the dance, yet I want to dance.

That is life. For the moment, I fall exhausted. And, finally, I rest.

I can feel the silence that won't let me dance. And, at a certain moment, the silence becomes infernal and as exhausting as the dance itself. And then, more exhausting, more tormenting and I want to leave the scene, but I still have moments to leave. I can feel the biological robot inside me and it wants to go on dancing but he is tired out; it doesn't want the infernal silence of memories any more. I don't want past any more. I want a different silence.

The one of the place where I would feel no breath of wind stirring, where even a swan stays still, knowing that the lightest flap of wings would destroy the eternal image

of the clouds reflecting in the mirror of the lake, like a frontier between two eternities, between two realities, between two worlds.

A frontier where I could see and understand madness from, where the insignificant would become significant and the cruel reality, non-reality. Where the angels would eat at the same table with the sinful in ourselves.

Where there would be light and wings next to our thoughts, next to our love, where there would be songs played in groups, flying through our sky, which exists only because of our consciousness, which exists through us, the ones who see it, through the babies born in sin and in Original Sin.

The angel troops, who washed their hands of our sin, in their holy water, receive clear and infinite air. Then you should be with the un-sinful and un-spoiled and our life and reality should be somewhere, forgotten and passed with us, in non-existence and Nirvana.

I don't believe in insanity as something pathological but, rather as an experience in another reality where red becomes white and the leaf that floats in the air, carried by the cold autumn wind, becomes a beautiful swan, which left the lake of silence, passing the frontier into a different reality, where every thing, thought, feeling has a different value, gets a different reality and the awareness is made under the auspices of some other laws that govern the nature of that reality.

In our reality, the frontier that borders other realities is relativity itself. It has been physically-mathematically proved that trains can run through a bedroom and that a cannibal tribe and a jungle can live inside a sumptuous palace. The Nobel Prize in physics has been granted for this theory.

It is strange, but it is true! By insanity, the soul lives in another reality and the body remains in this one. Are we really living the reality we see, we feel and we are convinced it exists? Related to other realities, aren't we some poor insane, bizarre and blind people?

Then, are we capable of judging Divinity? Never. Are we sure that a tree is a tree? That a car or a flower or a turtle or a table or a lamp are what they are? Are we what we are? Do we know ourselves? The great cultures of humanity, are they cultures? Geometricians, who show us that the straight line is round and Pitagora's theorem is limited at a certain space, are they going to stop here?

Are we us? Is the ocean, with its waves that break against the rocks, the water that gives us life and in which we are born, really water?

Then is the biblical "believe and do not question" no longer true as the truth itself?

And would we, who are more treacherous and sinful, but proud and conceited, ready to assert that we know the reality, also assert, in our blindness, that there is also relativity?

In this case, isn't relativity relative?

At least, Divinity clearly evinced it to us. A relative relativity is no longer a relativity, but a continual re-nominalization, a continual transformation that depends on the soul which existence sifts or through which it sifts itself. Maybe the most real moment of our existence is when we pray to God, no matter what religion we share, no matter how we view Him, whether we are Christians or Moslems or Hindus or other religion.

Nothing could be more real than love and, above love, Love of God, which would shine by simplicity and purity, without asking yourself, haughtily: "What do I get in return?", without asking questions about the holy scriptures or Divinity. Everything exists by destiny, and this is given by the Unique and Eternal God. We only have the impression that we know ourselves, we have the impression that we intensively live our life, without living, that we are born, when in fact birth does not exist, that we are important, when in fact we don't mean a thing, that we die, when in fact death does not

exist, and finally, that we exist, without knowing how and why.

The sun rose embracing with its beams the huge and snowed peaks of Himalaya Mountains. We are flying at twelve thousand meters. In this magnificent sunrise I find God closer than ever. Sometimes I can feel an absolute peace seizing my thoughts and feelings; I feel the need to pray, to thank Him for the real peace, for this magnificent sunrise.

"Lord, I thank you for the real peace that I find when I'm thinking of You, may the struggle of my life exist only as Your Will, so that I polish my soul, for who knows what level of my existence, which I don't understand. Forgive me for being wrong when I am thinking of the hardships of life as a burden and not as my unchaining from the sin, with each moment that passes by and brings me near death. May Your Name be praised by Eternity, Lord, as You are love and goodness. Only You can understand reality because only You are within all spiritual plans at the bottom of which there is probably us. We are blind and we cannot understand the spiritual plan that is above us, so much the less the countless spiritual plans, which are endlessly rising at Your feet like a grain of dust at the feet of a mountain. I submit to You, God, and ask You to forgive me, the sinful, for I don't always know how to seek for You as I should, for I commit a sin by sometimes trying to face the hardships of life by myself, suffering terribly and most times wrecking in the harbor of some dreadful moments, instead of asking for Your support, gaining strength only by the mere thought that takes me to You. Amen."

The moments when Irene was looking at Mark indifferently come back to me; when fate made her become a pseudo-lawyer of her own divorce case, balancing the legality or the facts that occurred in her own life as if she were a stranger who didn't live and know her life. I remember how I told her:

"Mark was born ... I remember that the night before giving birth of our son we watched a comedy. We laughed out. Then I cooked an omelet using many eggs. Of course, I don't know why, I can rarely cook a good omelet that would not be burned. Although it was burned, I took it to her in bed. She could hardly move. I wanted to help her, as much as could."

"That's very nice of you, sir", said Irene.

"I thought that she would refuse it ..."

"And, didn't she?"

"Oh, no, she told me that it was the best omelet she had ever eaten in her life, then she took my hand and put it on her belly, telling me:

'Can you feel it kicking? I'm sure it will be healthy boy, a strong stout fellow.

How do you think it will look like?"

"Well, first of all, boys resemble their mother very much, so I suppose he will look exactly like his mother."

"I would like him to have something from you too, you are not quite the worse and ugliest man in the world!"

After this joke, she smiled and she sat in my arms, while I was stroking her silky and curled hair."

I dropped my raincoat on the back bench of the car and I started to Atlantic City.

Our New York Las Vegas. I don't know why I decided to stop on the way that was taking me to Atlantic City. I wanted to burry myself into a casino, looking for my luck like a gold searcher who hates gold, more than anything. The other participants in the traffic behind me, started to honk stridently.

I don't know whether I could really hear the noise of the honks, or I just had the impression that the infernal whistling of a train, which was just passing by the station of my feelings and fear, breaks upon my ears.

All these, because the crowd seemed familiar to me, because I happened to be on a bridge, at the exit from New York, a bridge that I considered as being crowded with our own moments, the moments of those who were on it at that very time. Suddenly, I imagined that life is a bridge between birth and death, without knowing that after death, I mean after I will have crossed and let behind this bridge, I will meet another one that would bring back birth. I don't exactly remember how I started the car, all I know is that I needed a casino as once, when I was a teenager, I needed to go to the prostitutes who were waiting for a client on the road. Ten of times I felt the need to go to one of them and to ask her as seriously as possible: "How much?" and then to take her in my last type Lincoln, that only existed in my dreams, and into my bed to have sex.

Then, even my imagination stopped, because my teenage thought about sex was reduced to a wish and not to a certain technique or image. Suddenly I felt ashamed of my own thoughts and would put off the visit to the prostitutes for some other time and, why shouldn't I admit, it happened a few years later.

I felt something similar to a roulette then. I drew the conclusion that the difference between sex and a roulette only depends on age. I understood that all I needed that moment was a roulette of my own life, a kind of oracle that, once turned, would reveal the destiny, in its real bareness.

I was going to the casino not because I wanted to win or to lose or because I had so much money and I wanted to while away my time. I just bet on the smallest amount. I suppose I felt more secure next to the roulette; maybe because I could see the unexpected with my own eyes, because the emotion and restlessness turned into a vision of the future, a vision that was so strange to the past and to the unknown.

I could see the unknown obediently rolling before my eyes. I was not interested in a particular number, even though I sometimes won and sometimes lost. A few people next to me were hoping, with lost eyes, for a winning number.

For them, the roulette was everything, their life, the play with the risk, with the contingency. Some of them would shudder thinking that their own earnings, maybe for a month, were spent in a few hours. I could see they were in despair and, nevertheless, they would not stop, even though they knew they were losing. They wanted another try. They believed in chance, in risk. In the madness of turning to other cardinal points of destiny. Some of them were losing, other were winning, but all of them had played the roulette for many years. Those who won, were going to lose and those who lost, were going to win next time. Although they believed in risk, in chance, they didn't understand that these were not important for them, that not even luck was of not importance for them. They didn't understand that however rich they might be, however much they might have won, they would have still come to gamble, because not the awareness of the chance or luck was important for them, neither the enrichment or impoverishment, but the roulette, in a word the Future, the need to be themselves again, knowing their destiny beforehand. The same thing that had brought me to that casino too, with the difference that, for me, the roulette meant much more than my own destiny; it also meant the destiny of a newly born child: Mark. I was watching the counters on some numbers that, at first sight, were lacking of life, but that, once chosen, could support an event; yes, an Event, happy or ill-fated, winning or blank; an Event. What else can a passionate roulette gambler be, but a man craving for events, not for money or other gains? I have also been to Las Vegas. I've seen people rolling in money, playing with unspeakable avidity and not because they needed money or other honors, but because they lived that event, they lived the false idea that they would be some kind of Creators who, by choosing a number, they would create an event, a gain or a loss, like we have a number as a birth day, which can be winning or non-winning, just like the roulette game. There have also been several unlucky cases, so to call them, when

some people lost their entire fortune and, yet, they kept on playing.

Chapter 5

I remember that, when I was living in Las Vegas, this world capital of the games of chance, I had a neighbor who rented, just like me, an ordinary apartment. One day, as we were chatting, we started to tell each other about certain moments in our lives.

After I had told him that I was from Texas and that I had been living in Las Vegas only for a couple of years, he told me that he was from New York, the only son of a very wealthy industrialist. He used to gamble ever since he was young and, eventually, he got to be obsessed with this. He moved to Las Vegas where he owed a sumptuous residence but ill-luck followed him all the time, so he lost his entire fortune, including his luxurious house and cars. Eventually, he became homeless, sleeping on the streets of Las Vegas for more than three months.

He told me how disappointed he was. He didn't know what to do. Finally, he got a job: as a cleaning service employee to the casino that had stolen his fortune. He was washing the halls and the toilets on one floor or he picked up the papers and the scraps dropped by the clients.

What do think he was doing with his wages? He played almost all of it and sometimes he even renounced to food. He was a person who had lost hundreds of thousands of dollars and he came to earn a few hundreds of dollars a month. He was happy when the management of the casino increased his wages to one thousand ten dollars a month.

His parents had died before he moved to Las Vegas. He had nobody. When he was rich he didn't want to get married for fear he would get to be coordinated by some one in his life.

Everybody stood beside him then. He had a lot of friends, women who gladly shared their charm, in the elegant beds. He didn't feel like he needed a wife. He was full of conceit. I was very surprised by the fact that this man didn't hate the casino that ruined him at all; on the contrary, he loved it; but he loved it with all his heart, because poverty had taken him down from the ivory tower, on which he was when he was rich. It helped him live in the real world, with its good and bad parts.

It helped him understand that the women who slept with him didn't like him but they were also looking for a mirage, the one of the power given by money.

Actually, they were a kind of gamblers themselves, equally overwhelmed by the obsession of gambling, even though it was not the roulette, but the gamble of staking on one guy or another, on his achievements, on his wealth, on his luck, and eventually they would stop looking for the person, but for what he meant. Just as the number on which he played his counters didn't matter to him, the number itself didn't matter, but the event or the feeling that this number was rendering.

I asked him several times, even though I became a little cynical: what did he feel that moment, when he realized he had lost his fortune? When he told me he felt happy, I considered him crazy. How can you be happy when you see that you just lost the

acquisition of the generations before you, which you inherited? How can you be happy when you know that you would have to work hard for every piece of bread? Now I understand him. However rich you might be in this life, it doesn't mean that you are happy. The golden polish of wealth can hide the pain in your soul much better than a poor man who is worthy of pity and compassion.

The more people envy you and the more isolated you are from the ordinary and poor people, the more your soul will bleed because you do not need false words or smiles, you do not need ungrounded praises or false declarations of love or friendship, but what you need more than ever is truth, you need to break the cage that separates you from the crowd and to tear the isolation, to become a socialized from an un-socialized. This is the nature of the human soul. However much you might try to dramatize certain moments, they become false and painful as long as they are not grounded on real fundament.

Even the most dangerous delinquents can feel somewhere, in a small room inside their soul, this ancestral need, the need of fundament. Naturally, after having lost his fortune, my neighbor became another person. His friends started to avoid him, women were no longer eager to come to his bed, people considered him as an ordinary man, without prostrating themselves in front of him; many people even looked down on him, displaying a kind of foolish, strange arrogance and emphasis. Well, the social rank! He told me how, this time, he was the one who flattered the wealthy people who looked down on him.

He confessed, in a very self-assured voice, that he wouldn't like to be what he used to be any more and that, in case fate would give him such opportunity again, he would never be man he used to.

It's been about ten years since then. I was just a juvenile; maybe that is why I couldn't understand my neighbor then.

But in time everything changed. If back then I thought he was crazy or some kind of adventurer, now I would regard him in a different light. I wish I met him again. I would have so many things to talk to him about that I don't think a few days would be enough. But I'm sure that I'll never see him again. There are so many people that I met and who meant something in my life but I'll never meet again. Some of them are living on other continents, lost, others died.

I have the feeling that we are some passengers in a train.

Each of us is staying in a compartment with a few others. In each station, a traveler gets off, maybe from your compartment, and you will never see him again, ever, even if he was your father, your brother, your grandfather. The railway stations bear the names of the days, months, years. Each of us has his station, where we will get off and we will cross the one way bridge of the Styx.

Then we will say goodbye, for good, leaving the ones who were dear to us or the ones we knew with our memory, which will die with them. Our mission is to die a little every moment, to travel by the train of life, in the compartment with our relatives and acquaintances, obediently waiting for our death.

Death is a return to the Great Time, through which I, the traveler, thirsty for the morning stars, for the scent of the mowed hay, for the ridge of the mountains, for the roaring of the oceans, for love, get off I my station bearing a name of day, month, year. The platforms are deserted; the train in which you are left towards other stations, other times. I say goodbye. Whatever I might say, the words are cold, they could not express the devouring fire of the afflicting parting, or the one of the meeting again in the eternal life.

I neither lost, nor won that day. Lately, I got home. That evening, I drank red wine until I got tipsy.

I'm here with Mark and Irene. For many years, Mark grew up without his mother and Irene doesn't even realize she is my wife and Mark's mother. She thinks she's a lawyer who wants to help me in my divorce proceedings against my wife. *She* is my wife! The one who listens indifferently to what I have to say about Mark's birth.

"So, you have been there for your wife during her most difficult moments. I understand you, sir, the judge will have nothing to object against your behavior that, so far, I find exemplary. Do you still love her? Maybe you do."

"Yes, I still love her!" I answered shouting.

"Then, why do you want to divorce her?"

"Because ... Because she's not living with me. In a way, I need a sort of freedom, so to call it."

"Are you seeing anybody else?"

"No, I don't have and I never had any serious relationships so far."

"Why don't you try to bring her back to you, if you love her? Is she seeing anybody else?"

"No. She is very serious."

"Why don't you get in touch with her and let her know about your true feelings for her."

"I have tried that several times."

"And?"

"It didn't work, it didn't work, it didn't work! I repeated."

"Are you willing to try it again?" Irene asked.

"Yes, if I knew that one day, even if that is the last day of my life, I could bring her back."

"I don't think that divorce is the solution that could make you happy, dear sir, she said."

"Then, what do you advice me to do?"

"Be patient, said Irene. Think again. You should never oppose love."

"Yes, you should never oppose love, I repeated."

"Maybe I can help you, sir. I'll try to talk to her, explain her how much she meant for you, said Irene."

Of course I would have liked that. On that moment, I felt like telling her: "Irene, dear, it's you, you are my wife, you are the woman I don't want to divorce from."

I think I did the right thing when I refrained myself, at the last moment, from telling her that. I knew that if I had told her all these, I would have lost any relation with her, the real Irene. I told her:

"You cannot help me. My situation is not that simple."

"It is not simple? You, man, always know how to complicate your existence, complicating things. Still, I will try to help you. Tell me, where is she?"

On that moment, I had no idea what to tell her. I was afraid to tell her the truth because I had tried that so many times before and she had never accepted it, moreover, she had broken off any relationship or connection with me, for a long while. She was only a lawyer who could intercede to the judge for defending such and such a cause in a law suit.

She ardently wanted to become a wife, a mother, to have a family.

But when this family came to visit her, begging her to join it, telling her how much it misses her, she would suddenly estrange from her wishes, her dreams, her ideals and she would become cold and blunt to any attempt of ours to emotionally get closer to her.

She wanted affectivity, but when she had it, she couldn't accept it; it was as if it scared her, as if it was a dream, too fine for her.

So fine that she couldn't accept it, that any connection with such things seemed like an outrageous lie, something horrible, obscene, maybe worse than a curse. As a matter of fact, I don't even know whether she could love any more, whether the feeling of love itself hadn't become a kind of meaningless notion, a simple abstracting.

Eventually I decided to tell her about my wife like she was another person, but with a somehow similar direction in life, trying to establish a connection, however small, a complimentary link, to establish some kind of common denominator:

"My wife, dear counselor, is in a mental hospital. This 'dear counselor' was, in fact, the certainty of distance from a person that she didn't know, but the fact that the person I was talking about was in a mental hospital was actually the common denominator between her and that imaginary person."

"Poor girl! Is she ill?" Irene asked.

"Yes, she is. I would give anything to help her recover."

"And yet, maybe I can talk to her, I would like to see her. What sanatorium is she in?"

"Somewhere near Los Angeles, on the other coast. I chose Los Angeles because it is very far from Florida."

"We'll go there." When I heard her saying that, I realized that she didn't know how far it was, that, for her, a few thousand miles were a mere trifle. Moreover, she didn't realize her strange situation either, being in a sanatorium and offering legal advice in her own office, which was her ward. I was trying to sneak somehow in her subconscious, to find a little gate for her own subconscious. Everything with a common denominator.

"I don't think that you would like to see her, madam," I said, trying to push her away from the idea of taking the trip that would have been an irremediable trap in our conversation because, if it had issued in the action, in taking the trip, in seeing and talking to her, she could have got stuck in that phase, because such trip was impossible. I took a step back, saying:

"I don't think she would be able to talk to you coherently, as her mental disorder is so serious."

"But tell me, sir, what is she actually suffering from?"

"She is suffering from schizophrenia," I decided to tell her. In fact, that was her diagnosis. Mark, the little boy, was looking at us and he couldn't believe that such a conversation was real. And yet, I could see the wander in his eyes but also that mechanical apathy of the body whenever you have to accept something that you cannot understand, as being perfectly normal, and what is normal becomes so abstract that gets fallacy.

"Schizophrenia," she repeated, as surprised as Mark was.

"Yes, madam," I confirmed.

"That a serious disease, as far as I know. Many people lose their minds because of it," said Irene.

I couldn't believe I heard her saying that. I mean, she knew that people who suffered from that disease could go insane. I couldn't understand. How could you be aware that this disease could make you insane, suffer from it yourself, and talk about yourself in a different person ... Anyway, I didn't know what else to say. I reached a dead end.

"Do you believe that there no chance for her to be cured?" I asked her after a while.

"A chance to be cured, sir?"

"Yes, a chance to be cured, madam."

"As far as I know there isn't, no. But maybe there are exceptions, why shouldn't

we think positive? Maybe a miracle will occur precisely in your wife's case. I understood how much it would mean for this boy to have his mother back, and for you to have your wife back. We should never accept a defeat as something irremediable. We should always fight, be winners ourselves."

I could feel that somewhere, in her subconscious, there was an extraordinary power, I could feel the superiority of her consciousness again, as I did before she got ill, before she became unaware of that pitiless disease.

"I would have liked to go to any lengths for her, to fight to the last moment beside her, but, concretely, I don't know what I should do."

Mark was looking at me, amazed, and yet he nodded his head. Then I started to recruit my spirits and, at all hazards, I made a vague allusion:

"If you, madam, would suffer from such a disease, how do you think your husband should behave? Do you think that he should visit you more often, to try to be there for you all the time, maybe this way he could make you become aware of the reality?"

Mark gave me the strangest look. I understood from eyes that he approves of what I was trying to do, but he didn't even have the words to express the core of hope in his soul. I was waiting for Irene's reaction:

"Yes," she said and, for the first time, I could feel a shadow of un-dissimulated warmth in her eyes, something that reminded me of the old times. I looked into her eyes as used to. She started to shiver as if she had strange fever. I didn't know what to tell her; should I go the lawyer's way, or Irene's?

"Yes, sir," she said after a short while. "I don't know what to tell you. Maybe you should spend as much time as you can with her, talk to her, try to offer as much love as you can. Yes, as much love as possible ..."

"Are you cold, madam? I can see you are trembling," said Mark.

"No, I don't know if this is cold. It's much more than that!"

"Much more?" Mark continued.

"Yes, something vague, something that makes me stop, something that hurts. After all, this not my case, isn't it?"

"It could be anybody's case," I replied.

"Anybody's case ..." Irene repeated.

"How do you feel about such a story?" I tried to open a recess in her mind by asking this question.

"What do you mean?"

"Do you find it ordinary?" asked Mark.

"I wouldn't call it ordinary" I said, waiting for Irene to confirm.

"It is very touching"

"What do you think I should do right now?" I asked her again.

"This is not for me to decide."

"But who is the one who should decide, in your opinion?"

"I think the answer cannot be offered by a human."

"By whom, then?" asked Mark.

"Are we really unable to do anything, are we really so weak, so insignificant that we cannot create a destiny for ourselves? Yes, a destiny."

When I uttered the last word, I emphasized it on purpose, almost syllabifying.

Irene seemed absent-minded, looking through a large window, with white bars that were trying to sift her look towards the trees that were struggling outside, in the storm.

It was hysterically raining but we couldn't hear anything because of the double tight glasses. It was a kind of deaf but pitiless window with vegetation, with the leaves that it lifted high as if wanting to steal this passing symbol of the trees, to leave them naked, without the summer memories, but much purer.

A storm that wanted to fasten time, holding it prisoner in the stout arms of the ocean foam storm and cloud muscles, with roaring voice and whirlwind heart. Irene turned her eyes to me, trying somehow to measure me with her look. I could feel the fire smoldering in her but I didn't know what kind of flames there were. After all, whatever king of fire that was, it was still fire, consuming plasma that created the Universe and life and us, at the Creator's desire.

"Such a small, insignificant destiny, a grain of sand on the shores of the oceans.

That's all. A destiny that I would like to change; to take past and present in the hollow of my hands, to mould it like clay on the potter's wheel, to feel them taking a shape, a soul from my soul. Yes, it is necessary to use much soul for each jug ..."

"It is necessary" Irene repeated. "Much soul is necessary, much soul. But what if the jug breaks into peaces at the spring with the water of life, what if instead of a jug there are just some fragments? What then?"

"There could still be hope. I will take each fragment with soul that I have inside me and I would remake the jug, pasting it together, as in a puzzle of life. The second time I will reach that spring, I will hold it tightly in my hands, more carefully so that this time I wouldn't drop it, so that I could fill it with the holy water of life, of our destiny."

"Destiny, destiny, destiny ..." Irene repeated on and on, sometimes whispering, sometimes shouting, sometimes fast, sometimes slowly, ten times, twenty times, thirty times. I thought that our conversation had come to a dead end, that a crisis was about to burst.

At a certain moment, I even thought of calling the doctor, but, after a while, suddenly Irene stopped talking. She started to swing first her head, then her body, looking through the window at the trees that were whipped by the wind. After a few minutes she stopped swinging as sudden as she stopped talking. She looked at Mark and after a short time, she asked him:

"Do you believe in God?"

"I do"

"Do you believe in God, or in destiny?"

"In both", Mark answered.

"You cannot believe in both. God creates destiny, but destiny cannot create God.

But it can bring Him in the grieved souls who need support, consolation, a shoulder to cry on. Many people find this kind of consolation in God. Yes, yes, in God.

Everything that happened with you is connected to a certain destiny, good or bad, it is still a destiny and it is given by God. We have to know how to suffer in this life that was given to us and to thank our God, not only for our successes, but also for our failures.

And not only when to win, but also when we lose. Not only when we are happy, but also when we are sad or unhappy. Yes, yes, we should thank God for every single thing. Even when somebody slaps us we should turn the other cheek and we should do this with all the humbleness that characterizes us, forgetting all about pride and lie.

A man who doesn't know how to accept a slap is a weak man, a man who doesn't feel God close enough to gladly receive His divine breath that gives power and strength and, more than that, hope."

"I accept the infallibility of destiny, but what should I, as husband of this woman, do in order not to fight the windmills? Let's say that you are my wife. You suffer from schizophrenia, this miserable disease, which not only changes your personality and often ruins your life and your family's life, but it can take you to another world where you can hardly come back from.

Some specialists in this disease consider that there is no way back. Imagine that you would be my suffering wife. Can you do that?" I dared, trying to take another step

to reality, trying to anchor somewhere, near her real being, with husband and child, not her imaginary image.

"But if you were my mother, what would you do?" asked Mark.

"What would I do? That's hard to say." She started to swing her head again. "I don't know what I would do. First, I thank God I'm not in such condition. Then, I find hard to imagine myself in this position, because I never had a husband or a child. How I wish I had a child! But that's impossible since I don't have a husband, and I cannot accept anybody and anyhow as my husband, just like that. Of course, he should own a certain fortune he should have a certain university diploma, or more, if possible; a doctor's title. I consider myself as a highly educated woman and I don't think I could accept to live with an idiot." She stopped swinging. "I couldn't accept anybody and anyhow."

"I imagine you had many suitors who asked you to marry them, hadn't you?"

"Suitors? Well ... maybe I had, but I don't remember. I'm very busy with my work."

"That means that you had many clients here, in your office?"

"I don't know whether they were clients who needed legal advice or just some doctors whom I offered legal advice in exchange for the fact that they were treating me."

"Fantastic!" I replied, without realizing what I had just said.

"What is it you find fantastic?" asked Irene.

"The fact that such a famous lawyer like you is trying to help some poor doctors, in who knows what cases, in exchange for a treatment, which is probably just an ordinary treatment, isn't it? Judging by way you look, I don't think it is something serious, isn't it?"

"Oh, no, sir! Just an ordinary cold, nothing special."

"Have you had this cold for a long time?"

"What do you mean for a long time?"

"I got the flu last month, I was laid low with a fever for almost two weeks, swallowing handfuls of colored and bitter medicines. But I don't think that you are that seriously ill, as I was, aren't you?"

"No. I just have a slight cold that lasts and lasts and lasts. I can not tell the exact time, because it makes no difference. Anyway time is just an abstract notion and nothing else. Nobody should be interested in time. Sometimes I believe it doesn't even exist. What are the days, the months or the years? Just a counting and nothing more. And so is money. Some numbers. I hate numbers. They cannot help us in any way, they just establish limits in our lives. Wealthy and poverty are measured in numbers; so are youth and old; the quantity, the speed, the date of a break up, there are so many things that are measured in numbers. The numbers estrange us one from another, overwhelming our mind. I don't want numbers any more, no." Now she was shouting. "I'm not interested in numbers either," I told her trying somehow to calm her down.

"No, no, no, no!" she shouted "I'm afraid of numbers! Let me tell you a secret," this time she whispered. "Have you heard of numerology? Well, numerology is a science that deals with figures, with numbers, sir. Some of them are cursed signs from the Pharaohs, yes, they come from Pharaohs, from the Ancient Egypt. They foresee people's future. As the future is not always happy, but also miserable, for many of them, they foresee misfortune. That's why I'm afraid. Each birth date, each figure in this birth date, adds to the other ones and the result is a number that has a significance, isn't it, isn't it?" Irene started to shout again. "I don't want to hear about numbers, I hate numbers! Without them, we wouldn't have divisions between rich and poor, between sad days

and happy days, between value and non-value, between superior and inferior. Why should there be superior people and inferior people?

Why should there be superior and valuable and proud people while others suffer, poor them, in their inferiority, in their non-value? Why shouldn't all people be equal? Valuable or priceless. Don't you think it would be better this way? This doesn't make me a communist. No! I wish all these were given by God and not mentioned by a dictatorship or another.

What did this crazy race for value, for being first in a society lead to? To wars, to death, to all kinds of privations, in a word, to suffering. Only suffering generates progress, whether it is progressive or regressive. It's called progress any way.

Tell me, sir, if weapons, the most improved ones, are a necessity? The technological evolution, particularly the evolution of the information technology, will lead to the most ferocious dictatorship over the human being, to the dictatorship of technology over the soul. How would you feel if there were cameras on the streets, so tiny that you wouldn't even notice, as small as a bee slowly flying through the air, recording and conveying both image and sound to some computers that check us all, destroying any trace of intimacy? Yes, any trace of intimacy, which we need so much. How do you think a love story with no intimacy would be? What about the conversation between father and son, between husband and wife? Wouldn't all these relations radically change? And if all these relations are changed, won't the society change, in its whole? Won't it be programmed by those who are controlling the cameras, by those who are supervising this whole mess, who, in their turn, will be coordinated by one decision? Then, what does value lead to?

The difference between superior and inferior?

What if the decision that coordinates this sum of values is a mediocrity that started up by political meanness, what would that lead us to? We suffer, we die in order to reach a certain summit that we call value, and where do we find ourselves? On a flat tableland surrounded by other mountains, much higher.

Then we will definitely feel much worthless than we were when we started up to reach it, thousands of years ago. All these would have no meaning if they were some mere theories, but if all these were put into practice, if society decays into an alienation that is hard to stop, the war will become a normal element and we will find not only banal, but also necessary.

Just like death, in dreadful conditions. All that represents the misery of the human condition, would become law, constitution, something you must obey; we would be happy to witness the misfortune of our neighbors, it would be set as a good example. Where would we go to? This is why I am afraid of numbers."

"I understand you completely, madam," I said. "But we should admit that, in this existence that God gave us, we could not manage without numbers. Maybe it would be better if we didn't get obsessed with this, if we didn't think of thirteen as something malefic. However hard we might try to stay away, all we do is draw them nearer one way or the other and I would like to give you an example. Today it is a certain date, which represents a number that brings you bad luck, but you are trying not to be aware of the idea of number. Going out, you will pay a certain amount of money, which means a number; you will buy a certain number of loaves of bread and each of this division represented by numbers keep life in chain.

We have a number of hands, of feet, of fingers. Even if we are alike, most of us, we have our numbers on us, in us, next to us, all our life long. We fear numbers, actually we fear us, even if we were convinced that numbers will lead to social alienation, that they are impersonal, we exist through them and they exist through us. Life itself is a number. What would we become if couldn't estimate the size of space or

the passing of time, or the moment of birth or death? What would be like if society didn't have a number if individuals? Being afraid of numbers, we are afraid of life. God thought us that we should live our life the way it was given to us. I agree to this. You told me, few minutes ago, that there is a destiny, a destiny for so many things, but, above all, a destiny for so many lives."

"Awful, Mr. Sorin Cerin. Sorin Cerin is a number too!"

"And yet, madam, if you were my wife and you were deranged, as she is, what would you do?"

"First off all, since I am entirely sane, I can not imagine myself or, better said, I couldn't possibly imagine how I would look or acts if I were insane. This is the frontier between fantasy and reality. We are rarely or never aware that we dream when are sleeping tight and actually dreaming; it is the same when we are awake and aware of the reality without being asleep on that moment.

Thus, I believe there are three stages: first, the reality, second, the frontier between dream and reality, third, the dream. Each of them is relative. The dream can any time become reality and vice versa, thus the frontier that separates them also becomes relative, because when the dream is coordinated by reality is one thing but when the reality is coordinated by dream is different.

As long as I am not dreaming, I can not project my dream into reality. It's like wishing to have a dream in your sleep and you cannot even doze off for a second. I think that schizophrenia is a dream. I only live the reality. So it is impossible for me to tell you what I would do if I suffered from your wife's disease and I were she. I can not sleep while I'm awake. I think that neither El Greco slept when he painted *Christs stained with blood*; I think that he was gazing upon his disease somewhere on the horizon without actually seeing it but only feeling it. For years, he has painted in madhouses, for years, he has guarded the reality-dream frontier, trying to cover both of them, but he was a guard and nothing more. The truth is that we need dreams so much. How do think people would look like without dreams? Isn't hope a dream? What would we do without hope? We definitively could exist. We would destroy ourselves.

The reality is a dream just the dream becomes reality, because there is reality in dreams just like there is dream in reality, in wakeful state. The question is how much it is dream reality and how much it is reality in wakeful state. If the dream oversteps the frontiers of reality, we begin to live in dream and, it goes without saying, those who live more the reality will think that we are discordant. We all have that core of schizophrenia within us; the question is how much we dream in reality, if we can make a distinction between the reality we have been biologically programmed for, understand it as it is and the dream, because most people have not been programmed to understand all its aspects, living it socially. What would it be if we were biologically programmed to live certain dream that is parallel to the reality? We would be perfectly normal in that dream, just like in reality. But what if we would all be programmed to live the dream without being aware of the reality? The dream would definitively be an unquestionable reality and the real reality, so to call it, would be just a dream, if it was lived by one or a few individuals, in an overwhelming minority, and that dream, in case it overlapped the reality of the society, in case it overlapped the wakeful state, would become schizophrenia, although it would actually represent the real reality."

"That's right", I replied and I couldn't believe that a person suffering precisely from schizophrenia, can approach this subject detaching herself from the disease and talking from the point of view of a healthy person who gathers this whole process from outside, but who is incapable of approaching it from inside, as if she were a schizophrenic. Is this fear, is this a state of obedience to the disease that the suffering person cannot accept?

Or is it rather an existence that she lives in a different psycho-social dimension, where reality has its well-established canons, just like our reality? But what I found most amazing was that both realities coexisted, interfered in a complex amount of feelings and sensations and the sole dissonance was eventually the identity crisis, as we call it, which appears as a sine qua non reality from the patient's point of view and which, in its turn, can be neither controlled, nor changed.

Irene has this amazing capacity of philosophizing on issues like sickness and healthiness, as a generalization, but she cannot accept the pathologic inside her. I think this is the major gate that is locked up with a thousand padlocks and keeps us apart. The alienation from reality and never from her self. Her self, in its complicity, has changed, has been through an inherent transformation, during the evolution of the disease, a transformation that did not allow her to accept reality any longer, as opposed to us, who have been biologically programmed for this.

Once the respective dissension occurred, the self became more and more interiorized, more familiar to itself, finding itself, more than ever, in the its own ancestral feeling, refusing our scale of values, alienating itself from society but finding itself more than the biologic that sustains it.

There is a great dilemma at this point. Human alienation starts from self alienation within the limits of normality but a too elaborated self rediscovery implicitly verges the pathologic, regardless whether it results from the mental disorder or not. In conclusion, the alienation leads to the destruction of the society, but the rediscover of our ancestral values, in our souls, also leads to destruction. Thus, our existence or, better said, our existential level should be balanced. Society can only exist through a number of common denominators of the individuals who form it, such as: common senses, common perceptions of surrounding realities and, last but not least, common customs and traditions, even though they can become somehow independent from one another, but which are so much alike, as a whole.

So, diversity and variety, but within the same existential canons, such as senses.

Eventually I decided I tell Irene this:

"Let's acknowledge this paradox: oneness through diversity and variety. No matter how different we might be from one another, the society that we represent and that represents us in our time, during history, is unique, with our good and bad things. We are also unique, but, implicitly, we are so alike.

I understand the reason why you cannot accept to be in a schizophrenic person's skin and talk to me, madam.

Precisely because you are not a schizophrenic, as you told me. But you also told me that the disease could mean an experience lived in another reality. If the pathological reality, so to call it, was a representation of paradise that each soul desires, why couldn't you accept paradise as it is? But even more, I would also like to play this game, I mean to imagine a paradisiacal experience as being part of reality.

What do you think? Would you agree to be hypnotized by me and meet my wife in her reality? All I want is to live an experiment that my wife would live in that far away clinic. To know whether it is worth to divorce her. Would you help me, madam?"

"I'll do my best", said Irene.

When I heard this, I couldn't believe my ears. It was all I could ask for at that time. For me, it was not an experiment, but a possibility of being on the same mental level with her, where I could try to take her back to our level, for good.

"Thank you so much" I replied.

Mark was puzzled and he couldn't understand what was actually happening, what I wanted to accomplish with his mother, with my wife. It will be a hypnosis state, a kind of systematized raving, through which we would find each other on the same level of

ideas and values.

"I still have a question", said Irene.

"Tell me."

"You told me that you want us to meet paradise together!?"

"Yes, that's right. If you like, you can call me by my first name: Sorin."

"All right, Sorin, I'll call you like this, and you can call me ... I forgot. Call me, let's say ... Irene. I don't know why this name comes to my mind. It's like I forgot my own name, like I met someone with this strange name: Irene. Why did I forget my name? But why do I need a name now?" Irene asked, giving me an inquiring look, and yet, being absent-minded.

"So I can call you Irene."

This was definitively a success for me. It was a first step towards the restoration of her identity. A padlock of the monstrous gate had already been unlocked. There were still so many padlocks, but any small success was, in this situation, equivalent to moving a mountain.

"You can call me Irene, Sorin."

It was for the first time, after so many years, when I heard her talking to me like that.

"OK, Irene."

"I understand absolutely everything, Sorin, but yet I'm not sure about one issue related to the paradise."

"What do you mean, Irene? The paradise is the paradise, no matter how we approach it."

"I doubt that."

"Why?"

"I believe that each person has its own paradise. I can assure you that a person who takes drugs imagines his paradise full of heroine and marijuana, a hunter imagines his paradise full of animals staying almost still in his rifle range, a woman dangler will imagine his paradise as a river shore with naked women anxious to hold him in their arms; so many souls, so many paradises. I don't fully agree to Freud who asserts that our entire paradise lays round about sex.

I cannot stand sex. Maybe because I cannot feel love. I wish I could love, but I can't. I don't know why exactly I am so cold to everybody. For me, love is a mere abstract notion."

The fact that she already started to talk about love, about paradises, was bringing me near her, little by little. I thought that the nominalization of the word *love* was a conquered summit.

"I wonder how it feels to love", said Irene.

"Well, you can feel a fire smoldering inside you, but it's not fire, it's not heat, it is nothing physical, it is just soul. You can feel that your deep feelings, hopes, desires are the flame of the fire burning inside you, giving you wings and setting you free from hate, meanness and everything that is negative within yourself. You realize that the only valuable thing that we are given in our existence is that moment of love, even though it is ephemeral."

"It must be tremendous when you love. Are you a sexual guy?" Irene asked me.

"Not excessively, but why do you ask?"

"To see if our paradises resemble. You are not excessively, but still you are. I'm not at all. I hate sex. I think it is something mean, a misery invented by nature so that we can procreate. I feel disgusted when hear the word sex. Maybe I shouldn't be like that, but I feel something that induces me this frustration, as if I were enchained to the tree of eternal purity and I could never unloose myself. I only talked to you about sex in

order to see whether it is worth to live in a common paradise, even if it is just a game. I think that my paradise is very different from yours. After all, I don't accept love either, because I can only feel it in this abstract manner. I don't remember being in love, ever. I think it's a great nonsense. To feel you can fly, to feel burning flames within your soul, that's a plenitude sensation that only people who are taking drugs can feel. I don't take drugs, I would never do that", Irene said in a slightly upset voice.

In deed, Irene never took drugs, but she did love, she loved deeply. Both me and Mark. Only now I could realize how deep her identity crisis was. Maybe the only solution would be to tell her that I hate sex too, but as regards love, only idiots can feel it. I think would have been the only way out of this labyrinth that I was trying to solve. So I told her:

"You are perfectly right, Irene. I have told those things about love only because I didn't want you to reject me. There were just empty words, believe me; I know that most women enjoy this feeling as much as they like the coffee in the morning. With regard to sex, it is out of question ..."

"Are you an impotent?" Irene asked.

"No, why do you ask?"

"Because only impotents assert they don't like sex. Or maybe you don't like to have sex with a woman and you are a homosexual."

"No, Irene, neither of those."

"Then why don't you like it?"

I realized that Irene subconsciously wanted to set me a trap that was well devised by the intelligence she had, although she was mentally disordered. A failure, on that moment, would have definitively resulted in a splitting of the common set of values and to the scattering of the idea of mutual paradise through which I could have walked into her subconscious and, from there, after finding her, I would have begged her to come back to me.

"I don't like to have sex because I feel as cold and distant to this thing, as you do. Where is the true purity? Where is the real absolute? In sex? No way. It disgusts me. I think we have the same scale of values. I truly believe, Irene, that your paradise is my paradise. That I don't go through an identity crisis, as you think."

"Yes, I thought you did. But how did you know about this? Can you really read my thoughts?"

"Not at all."

"Then why did you mention the identity crisis that, in deed, I could notice about you."

"Starting from the discussion about sex and love. When I told you that I really believed in sex and love, I'm sure you thought I suffered from a serious identity crisis."

"That's right. Only a mad man could believe in sex and love."

"When I told you the truth, you doubt it."

"Yes, I doubt it because first you told me something completely different, but, yet, you are sane, because you told me that you detest sex and you hate love, and you are neither impotent, nor homosexual."

The truth is that no sane man detests love or sex with a woman. I noticed how different was Irene's scale of values from ours, which mean love and sex. Why shouldn't we admit the importance of sex not only as a procreation factor, but also as a social and mental binder, as an unchaining from energies?

"Let's begin, Sorin."

Mark was sitting in his armchair and he would rather not take part in this. I told him to leave the room because I wanted to be alone with Irene, so I called the doctor; he opened the door, closing it with a kind of professional, if not stiff, brutality.

"Now, Irene, I want each of us to sit in an armchair towards one another." I was placing the two armchairs in this position, while I was talking.

"I'm afraid, Sorin."

"Why should you be afraid? No one wants to harm you."

"Why are you doing all these?"

It was the king of question I wouldn't have wanted to be asked, not for the world, on that moment. I decided to explain as concise as possible.

"You promised you would help me with regard to my wife who is hospitalized in a mental hospital, thousands of miles from here."

"How could I help you?" Irene asked looking through the window.

"Just like that, by helping me to live in her reality, in the reality of her disease."

"Yes, but my paradise has nothing to do with her mental disorder, has it?"

"It has nothing to do with it. First of all, I would like to know what does a woman feel, in her own paradise, for a man? I know that my wife, in her disease, has her own paradise. Please, help me walk into a feminine paradise, just for a few moments." Of course I was not interested at all in the feminine paradise of who knows what woman, but only in her paradise, as she was my wife. I was hoping that I could be at least for a few minutes, if not longer, near a real Irene and, if possible, to try to call her back from there. Will she come back?

"I agree", said Irene later, after a few minutes that were more overwhelming and more unbearable than any others in my life. We sat towards one another, on the green clothed armchairs.

"Give me your hands, Irene."

"Is it absolutely necessary?"

"Yes, it is absolutely necessary."

"I feel a king of fear. I don't know why, but it is a fear that I cannot describe to myself. I don't even know what I'm afraid of."

I peered her, just like the great Tibetan Lama, Den Xing, taught me.

"Try to relax, to leave all your thoughts aside. Clear any feeling of fear, insecurity or anxiety away from your mind. Everything is just perfect calm, perfect harmony in the Universe, around us." I took her arms, which were cold and limp, into my hands. "Now, let's try and close our eyes. Everything is calm. Perfect calm. We are not interested in anything around us. Only our eyelid become heavy. We are trying to fall into a deep sleep. Deep, but conscious. Irene, can you hear me?"

"Yes, I can hear you. I feel drowsy."

"Try to feel the calmness and the harmony of the Universe."

"Yes, I can feel it more and more profound."

"You feel like drifting, don't you?"

"Yes, I feel like drifting."

"Can you tell me where you are, Irene?"

"I don't know, somewhere in the Universe."

"Can you see stars, galaxies?"

"Yes, I can feel them in a strange pleasant way."

"How exactly?"

"They are pouring me something that I can not define, just like my mother used to pour to me, when I was a child."

"You don't know what they are pouring to you?"

"No."

"Do you remember your mother?"

"No."

"Then how do you know what she was pouring you when you were a child?"

"It's just a feeling."

"Can't you define this feeling, Irene?"

"No."

"Do you know where exactly you are in the Universe?"

"I have no idea."

"Does the Milky Way sound familiar to you, Irene?"

"No, it doesn't ... Why Irene!? I am not Irene."

"How is the Universe in which you are now? Dark, shiny, with many galaxies, stars, comets? What can you see there?"

"Yes, I can see many galaxies, stars, comets. It is just like the sky in a clear summer night, on a mountain peak. Maybe much clearer."

"If I would ask you to find the Earth, would you?"

"Let me try."

"Please, try, Irene."

"I'm traveling through the Universe faster and faster. Everything turns round and yet it is a very pleasant feeling. It's strange, I don't feel dizzy at all."

"Do you have any idea where you are going to, Irene?"

"I am not sure. All I can say is that I have a pleasant feeling and that I am running at a very high speed towards me, if you know what I mean."

"Try to describe me how you feel, Irene!"

"I don't know if I am Irene. The whole Universe with its galaxies, stars, comets around me in inside me too. I feel I become an entity and nothing else."

"What is your identity?"

"A kind of desire, hope, astral rustling, which vibrates inside me. I cannot explain it. I'm in a mental plane that has different notions than those I use when I reason. It attracts me towards it. I'm not going only up or down, but both up and down at the same time. All I know exists as something that never existed, and the past is reflected in the future. Suddenly, I can see a large spiral in front of me. A huge spiral made of galaxies. Each astral body made of billions of bodies contained by the spiral, has its own identity and voice. It's like a different and different mental plane."

"Are you sure that the elements contained by the spiral are stars?" I asked her, unsure whether I should let her go there or not. I was afraid that she might get caught in a certain mental plane where there would be no way back. This could lead to death, if not to total insanity.

"They look like stars. They are some shiny spheres, like burning spheres. Yes, that's the word: light mental spheres."

"Would you like us to go to those spheres? Do they tell anything, do they call you?"

"Yes, I would. Not only that they call me, but I also feel a kind of pleasant sensation."

"OK. Let's go there! I'm with you, Irene!"

"If you would rather call me Irene, suit yourself."

"How would you like me to call you?"

"Gemma" she answered.

"Why Gemma? This is the name of a star."

"It vaguely reminds me of the Aurora Borealis, and of the Bootes with its great sun Arcturus."

"Ok, Gemma. Then who am I?"

"You are a soul that a lost, but it is a loss without space and time, which I found on the Earth."

"How can you define the notion of loss without space and time? I don't think that

you can lose something and you cannot say that you lost that thing then, I mean at a certain time. I cannot understand this!"

"I can, Arcturus. But I cannot find the words to explain to you. Beware, Arcturus, because we are going into the spiral."

"I understand, Gemma, I'm here with you. Where do you want to go in the spiral? Is there a certain place you want to go, Gemma?"

"Yes, Arcturus. I am happy, I have a certain place I want to go to."

"Where, Gemma?"

"To the Aurora Borealis. We'll find a planet that is older than the time we knew on Earth."

"Why do you want to go there?"

I admit that at a certain moment I almost got into this dream state myself, but I tried, as much as possible to keep my lucidity so that I could help her when the opportune time would come.

"I want to go there because I was really happy."

"Can you define happiness, Gemma?"

"A state of beatitude, self fulfillment, ... Anyway, Arcturus, I can not put it into words!"

"Can you maintain this state on Earth too?"

"On Earth, Arcturus? Never. It makes me thrill when I hear about that planet."

"Try to forget it, Gemma."

"Yes, I better forget it. Come to our planet, Arcturus, somewhere in the Aurora Borealis. Can you see how many suns we have?"

"Yes, I can see them, Gemmma", I replied while I was thinking of bringing her back from the trance state she was in.

"Do you remember, Arcturus?"

"What, Gemma?"

"Many years ago, when you were a child, when you were less than fifteen years old, you had a dream."

"How do you know about my dream, Gemma?"

"There is an ancestral sphere, a kind of mental level of ideas, which wants to remind you of the dream you had and that hunted you all your life, being one of those dreams that we rarely remember during the years, Arcturus."

I was trying to remember that unusual dream in which I was somewhere on an unknown planet from the soil of which a strange stem was coming out and it was not going up in the atmosphere but stayed somewhere, half a meter above the ground that was studded with huge roots and a kind of plants that, on our planet, would look more like tropical plants, from the jungles. A voice was asking me what I was doing there, and I answered that I had come from the Earth.

I don't know where that voice was coming from, but I felt I was tracked. Then, a young woman appeared; she was looking just like Irene, except that she had long, darkbrown hair on her shoulders, falling down like a cascade, on her back. When she saw me, she gave me a familiar look. Although I was by myself in that tropical forest, I don't know why I had the feeling that I was coursed, that I had done something wrong and that I was to be sent on the Earth in order to expiate some punishment.

Then She appeared in front of me, She called me and talked to me in a friendly voice as if She had loved me and She had gladly waited for me on that enigmatic and mysterious planet.

"Come! I am Maya" She said. I had the feeling that I had met her before time was born, since the Universe. We stepped into a spaceship, in fact, it was rather a kind of space-taxi. I felt I loved her.

"Do you think they are coursing us?" I whispered, looking to another space-taxi that was crossing us.

"No. They know that you will return to Earth to expiate your punishment."

"But what did I do?"

"What you did is not that bad, but I cannot tell you what you did exactly."

"OK, but I love you, Maya!" I replied to the beautiful girl in my dream.

"I love you too!" she answered.

"Can't we hide somewhere together?"

"By no means. In order for us to become free, you have to go back to Earth. Don't forget, I will wait for you until you come back on this planet. My time is not equivalent to your time, the one you spent on Earth. Here, it will be a few days until you come back again. But there it will take a lifetime. It is a canon that you have accepted and so you have to accomplish."

"But I would like to stay here, with you, Maya"

"That can't be, my darling, I promise that I will wait for you only, until you return."

Those were her last words, then I suddenly woke up. I admit that this dream has hunted me all my life, like an obsession.

Chapter 6

"I am heading towards that planet, Arcturus!" said Irene.

"Do you know its name, Gemma?"

"For the moment, I don't; all I know is that it belongs to a level of ideas, which is much more superior than the one on Earth", said Irene.

"You mean the suns, the stars, the planets are spaces in which souls are living at different mental levels?"

"Of course, Arcturus! Do you know how the Earth looks like if viewed from another mental level?"

"No, Gemma."

"It's like a Moon."

"With no population, no buildings, Gemma?"

"Yes, Arcturus, it is a kind of cold and deserted Moon, with no atmosphere, if we can call it like that."

"I wonder at what mental level are we, the inhabitants of the Earth?"

"I wish I could tell you, but there is something that prevents me from making this assertion."

"Where are you, Gemma?"

"I got to that planet full of steam and huge roots, a wet planet, with luxurious plants. It's your planet, Arcturus."

"My planet?" I was so excited that I could hardly refrain my breathing. I was overwhelmed by Irene's lucidity. Was she traveling through sidereal spaces or was she mentally reading my thoughts, through some kind of strange telepathy? Either way, I

was astounded, being afraid not to get myself to some kind of mental blocking. Irene was in a deep trance and she was rather terrifying than settling me down with that she was telling me. I didn't know what to do. Suddenly I found myself in a kind of sciencefiction story, which I wouldn't have believed, not for the world, if I hadn't lived it on that moment.

"Is there anybody on this planet, Gemma?"

"For the moment, I don't see anybody. I can hear or feel a voice telling me

'Welcome!' I feel that everything is deserted."

"Try to ask about the young woman in that dream I had many, many years ago, Gemma."

"I ask mentally, Arcturus. She is next to me now. She is very pretty. HER NAME IS MAYA!. She looks at me warmly. She tells me that she saw you on her planet a few days ago and that you will go back after a short while. She wants you to be brave, very brave".

"Please, Gemma, ask her who are you for me on Earth and why."

I believe this would be one of the most crucial moments in Irene's conscious and subconscious, a moment when the beautiful girl would reveal her that she is my wife and, when she comes back, a large part of her schizophrenia would be somehow cured. I am waiting for the message from Irene's sleeping lips. Irene keeps quite. Her eyelids are spasmodically starting. Each moment is very long.

"Arcturus, another person arrived, telling me that you have to expiate your punishment on Earth and that you should not be told anything more, and after that you will return here. This tall man, whose face I cannot completely unravel, is very pale. He wishes you good luck in expiating your punishment there, on Earth, and he tells me that after that you will be just like everybody else on this planet and no one will ever remind you of the mistake you once did.

I mentally ask him what kind of mistake you did and he tells me that this is something that cannot be unraveled and that he cannot tell me whether I am cosmically connected with you, on Earth, either. He only advises you to manage your life there, where you are."

"Please, Gemma, ask him one more thing."

"What, Arcturus?"

"Ask the young woman what she represents to me? Why did she appear in my dream several years ago?"

"Now, Arcturus, I will tell you her exact words, that's what she asks me to do. She says that she is your astral match. She is your half over the times. She's with you in almost any trial you are going through on Earth. She knows it is difficult for you and she tells you to be brave. She is waiting for you anxiously. It's been less than two weeks since you left. You have only one or two more weeks, in their time. She is waiting for you and she loves you deeply. She also says that your braking apart would mean the total destruction of both of you; with regard to Irene, she advises you to take her to a level of ideas and to try there. There is nothing she can do."

"Tell her that I love her, Gemma. Can you do that?"

This way, I was trying to see whether Gemma has the slightest feeling of jealousy to Arcturus, so that I know how I should talk to her in that level of ideas on Earth, where the two will become Irene and Sorin.

"I told her that you loved her, Arcturus. Now she invites me in a kind of space-taxi and she tells me that I will wake up on the Earth."

"Yes, Gemma, tell her I thank her, but ask her to help you wake up in your childhood or adolescence, when Irene's schizophrenia started. Ask her to help you feel what Irene felt on that moment, Gemma."

"You mean I will wake up with Irene's parents beside me, Arcturus?"

"Yes, Gemma, I think that you could help Irene a lot, trying to go back to the moment when Irene knew for sure that she was suffering from schizophrenia and she started her first treatment. So, Gemma, this time, you will become Irene! OK?"

"OK!" she told me. "I am Irene. I have fifteen years old, I live somewhere in Dallas, Texas."

"How are you, Irene?"

"Who are you?"

"My name is Sorin Cerin."

"Sorin Cerin? I've never heard of you."

"Nice to meet you, anyway."

"Nice to meet you too, Sorin Cerin."

I don't know whether I'm an angel from a mental level that is much superior to the one of the other people on this planet, what I know for sure that this time I feel I have a mission to accomplish on Earth. I feel I'm superior both to this existence and to others' existence. That I must help. Just help. First of all it is the faith in the Creator. People should know that they are blind and deaf, that they have no power, whether they are chiefs of states, of governors or mere beggars on an alley that is washed by the streams of rain. We should all understand that we are obeying some universal law, which we cannot get rid of because this law is part of ourselves and we are a little part of it. What if this world would be governed by altruism and kindness, if people would not commit murders in order to spring up, if there would be a true, fraternal love? You can see your neighbors in suffering on the streets, in the conveyance means and I wonder how many of us really try to help them? How many of us didn't laugh seeing a poor beggar shivering a corner of a street? Even though it wasn't the lugubrious laugh of the paltry and proud people, it was a kind of proud that we showed. Why?

Out of foolishness? I don't think so.

Out of arrogance? Not necessarily.

Then why?

Because we, who are stuffed with everything, will never understand the real superiority of a beggar to us. We should beg, asking him for a moment of kindness. All these thoughts crossed my mind, as if someone would have sent them to me, but the strange thing was that they were sent from myself to myself. Anyway, I can feel hope somewhere, at the horizon, I feel that Irene will eventually recover. I wonder whether this is idle hope. I must help her. I must do my best to bring her back from that wretched disease, which is schizophrenia.

"Can you tell me, Irene, what you would like to do today?"

"Why do you ask?"

"Well, just like that, because I would like to invite to the cinema."

"To the cinema? Is there a good movie on?"

"I think so."

"OK. Why not? But I have to go to school today ... Let me check my program. Oh, yes, I cannot go out today. I'm busy. Call me tomorrow."

"OK, Irene, I'll be right by your side now. I will become a kind of soul of yours. I will become you, Irene. You are going to school now. You arrived at school now. What do you see?"

"I meet a colleague. She is smiling at me. We greet each other. I can see that fat Mathematics teacher nicknamed 'the Gorilla' by generations and generations of pupils. He will soon retire. I can't stand him because I don't like Mathematics. I find it extremely boring. I somehow fear the Gorilla. Each year I'm on the verge of failing to get my remove because of Mathematics. Today, I will have Mathematics for my first

two classes. I will have to watch the flagged fats of the Gorilla who knows nothing but numbers. I'm in the classroom. There is much fuss. This fuss highly irritates me. But not more than the Gorilla. I wish I were free, I wish I was walking in the park. It is winter, last night we had white frost. We are at the beginning of January, in full winter. I'm anxious to see the trees blooming, in March. This is the period of the year I like most. I cannot stand two more hours of terrible boredom. I can't stand it any more! I can't stand it any more! What a scoundrel! His job to bore his pupils.

The Gorilla keeps talking and talking ..., he would better shut up. Shut up, shut up, shut up! I said the last two word in a loud voice. The Gorilla turned to me. He asks me why I interrupted him from the ineptitudes he was delivering. I don't know what to answer.

I'm afraid to answer the monstrous Gorilla. He talks to me sarcastically; I'm sure that this time there is no escape for me. He will not allow me to get my remove. I can't stand it any longer. I'm bored, I'm terrified of the Gorilla's Mathematics. I want to get out, to run away.

The Gorilla's clack goes thirteen to the dozen. This guy thinks he is a kind of God of this school, of Mathematics. I have to tell him. I don't answer him, I don't have the courage. I'm a coward, a wretched girl who is not capable of telling a man what she thinks of him. A man. But the Gorilla is not human, he is an animal! He should be caged in some zoo. I think that the zoo in Los Angeles is the largest one.

There, he would definitively meet other beings just like him. I think there are many gorillas there. He is still talking, sarcastically. He tells me, ironically, that I must be a genius in Mathematics if I told him to shut up.

The Gorilla invites me to the blackboard to prove my knowledge of Mathematics.

This is the science that irritates me most.

I think that, for me, nothing in this world is more repugnant than Mathematics and the Gorilla, who represents it.

I'm looking at the blackboard. It is so black. Anyway, I don't think that I will make it white with my knowledge of Mathematics. The Gorilla writes some strange signs on the blackboard. Figures. The Gorilla writes down the equality sign and leaves. He asks me, in a pathetic voice, to continue. That's not the case. I have no idea. I'm in trouble again. Another bad mark. What will mother say? She will kick up a row again. She will say that she making sacrifices for me and that, because of me, she is not even getting married. I don't want a step father. I wonder why did my real father leave her? I don't even know him. How I wish I knew him. I wonder if he's still alive. I don't know. The Gorilla comes to the blackboard again. He tells me that he's still waiting for me to solve this exercise. I'm not waiting at all.

The Gorilla turn his back upon me, talking to the students. I can't stand it any more, I can't stand it any more! Although I'm aware that my mother will kick up the row, I'm going to write after the equal sign what he deserves. I'm afraid that he will expel me from school. Am I a coward? Why should I be a coward? Why should I be afraid? He won't give me my remove anyway.

The scandal will my mother will be even bigger. Then, what should I do? I should transfer to another school. Good idea!

This time, Gorilla, I shall pay you smart for this! I grab the piece of chalk. How cold it seems this time, how large! I start writing after the Gorilla's equal sign: 'A nice banana for the gorilla, if he goes back to the zoo, in the gorilla's cage, where he belongs, so that he stops boring pupils with the God damned meaningless figures!'

My colleagues start laughing. The Gorilla hasn't turned around yet. He asks the pupils what they are laughing at. He thinks I miscalculated. I feel like wiping off what I have just written. Something keeps me from doing that. No, I won't wipe a single word!

The Gorilla turns around. He is reading. It seems like he knows about this nickname. I've wanted for so long to see this dull face of his in this moment.

The Gorilla is flabbergasted. He cannot believe his eyes. His face turns red, his eyes are popping out of their sockets.

He is trembling. At last, the great Gorilla, the monster, is trembling! He cannot utter a word. He, who is so talkative. Who mocks at pupils all day long. I am fifteen years old and I consider myself as a mature person. I'm an adult and I won't allow anybody to mock at me. Not even my mother whom I started to hate to death. I hate her almost as much as I hate the Gorilla. I'm looking into the Gorilla's eyes with no fear. His eyes are bloodshot. The Gorilla's eyes are no longer clear and sly as they are when he exclaims numbers. The Gorilla turn around like a soldier who has just been scolded. He is heading for the door. He closed the door behind him and this time he didn't slam it as he usually does, but he closed it gently. The Gorilla became civilized, gentle. My colleagues are roaring with laughter.

They are cheering me. I became a kind of hero for those cowards. I'm sure they would have wanted such a blackboard, such an answer for the Gorilla, some day. They all would have wanted it but no one would have had the guts to do it. Some of them are shouting 'well done', others 'you did it to the Gorilla' and others 'don't give up carry on! Finish the Gorilla!' The door opened vigorously this time and the headmaster of the high school appeared, followed by the tamed Gorilla. He comes to me and puts on his dark, gangster glasses. This is where his nickname of 'Gangster' comes from.

The Gorilla and the Gangster were reading my words on the blackboard, being astound. If they had read a quotation from the Bible, they probably wouldn't have paid so much attention as they did to my words. There have been about five minutes and they are still reading the few words I wrote.

Maybe the Gorilla and the Gangster are reading over and over again so that they will always remember this text. Maybe I'm a genius and I didn't know it! Why don't they read Proust like they are reading my text now? Eventually, the headmaster asks me with a sharp, strident, semi-thick voice, almost whispering:

"Have you been to the Zoo, in Los Angeles?"

"Yes", I answer.

"Were there many ..."

"... gorillas?" said the Gorilla.

"There were", I answered as if I were somewhere on the street, talking to the icecream vendor.

"Whom have you been to the Zoo in Los Angeles with?" asks the Gangster, this time in a higher and panting voice.

"With my mother", I answer politely.

"You have a mother?" the Gorilla asked with surprise.

"Me? I have a mother. I mean my mother is a human being."

"Haven't you relaxed yet?" asks the Gangster.

"I'm very relaxed."

"Well, if you have a mother ..." says the Gorilla, but the Gangster interrupts him.

"If you have a mother, ask her to come to my office tomorrow. Would you prefer a certain hour?" the Gangster says pompously this time.

"I think so", I answer in a bored voice.

"What time?" asks the Gorilla. "I would also like to have a few words with her" he says with his thick voice, as if he would speak from the bottom of a huge hog's head.

"Yes, what time?" the Gangster covers him with his thin, panting voice.

"I think after midnight would suit you both. Around one or two o'clock in the

morning" I answer those bastards.

"Oh, so early!" said the Gangster trying to be ironic, but his voice, which became even thinner this time, disclosed him and somewhere in the classroom, behind him, a few stifled laughter sounds could be heard.

"Do you think that's funny?" says the Gangster, visibly lost.

The Gorilla felt the same thing and he bravely interfered to help his friend in want:

"You better be sure that I won't forget this execrable behavior of yours. You affiliate with this ..." the Gorilla stops talking for a moment and then he repeats ... "this, this ... I have no words, how should I call her?"

"Human being, sir", I answer with an understood implication. "Yes, I really am a Human Being, with capital 'HB', female, while you are ... well you know it very well!" I replied, trying not to let them treat me like dirt.

The Gorilla turns to my colleagues, trying to find a few pupils who would support his demagogic speech that he was about to deliver:

"Her Majesty", says the Gorilla, trying to be ironical. "So Her Majesty is a Human Being and I'm not!?" He looks at my colleagues hoping for the approval of the collectivity. "Don't I have two arms and two feet, don't I have two eyes and five fingers at one hand, don't I look human?"

"The gorillas also have two arms and two legs, two eyes and five fingers at one hand", I interfere. I don't know where this all strength comes from, but I'm doing my best not to give up. My colleagues, who have only laughed in their sleeves so far, burst into a joint laughter. This time the Gangster hastened to the Gorilla's assistance:

"Quite, please, quite! He who won't stop laughing shall come to my office tomorrow morning, with his parents."

But my colleagues keep laughing and there is nothing the Gangster can do to stop them. The two, the Gangster, followed by the Gorilla, leave the classroom. My colleagues start cheering again.

So far so good, I'm a hero, it feels so nice to be a hero, but what am I going to tell my mother when I get home? I'll just tell her: "the Gangster ... Sorry! ... the headmaster of the high school is waiting for you, in his office, tomorrow morning." I sure she'll ask me what I have done this time.

I'll tell her the truth, as if nothing has happened. Bravely. A man with no courage is nothing but a rag of the society. I don't want to become anybody's rag. I want to feel free to say, loud and clear, what I like and what I hate, what bothers me. I can't keep all that's evil inside any more. The more I do this the bigger and bigger it grows! I've had enough with everything! I'm thinking about killing myself. Would this be a deed of cowardliness or a deed of great courage? They say that people who kill themselves are weak and coward, people who try to avoid the hardships of life. I think that nothing could more false! How many people had the guts to take their own life? How many people have this supreme courage of going to the other world by their own hand? Who considers those people as cowards? Those who are terrified and will see the doctor only because they have a running nose? Precisely the dastards consider the ones who have the courage to take their own life as cowards. Why don't I kill myself? I don't think this would be such a bad idea. After all, I'm free to do whatever I want with my life. What's the meaning of life? To procreate on and on, new and new individuals, who would have a miserable life on this planet? Why? For nothing!

My colleagues left the classroom. I'm alone. By myself, at last. I always hear about accomplishments, about competitions, about people who tear each other to pieces for money. All these, for what? For the absurd of having a more comfortable place in a tomb? In order to have a coffin that is a few penny more expensive than your neighbor's? In order to make inventions?

For whom? For other and other and other people who will be born on Earth, who will suffer on this planet? Sometimes full of haughtiness and arrogance? I would take all the haughty and ironical and arrogant people to a crematorium to see the bodies burning, to realize what life is, to see the ashes of what used to be a man, no matter how rich or powerful or poor he was, no matter how beautiful, influent or mean he was. That's the human being. Ashes. Then, what should you live for? Why should you try hard to subsist? In order to try and achieve "something"? Something that will consist in a house, a job, a child, if not several, who will ask you more and more as they grow up, and who will never be satisfied? In order to go through all kinds of suffering, shortcomings, conflicts, pain, hate, envy, illness, thrills, fear and so on, during all these years you spent on this planet?

Why all these? How happy must be the ones who died. I consider them as being the true winners. Why does life exist? Because that's what our Creator, God, wanted. Why did He allow all the cruelties and atrocities to happen if He is Omniscient, if He is the Mighty, and His thought becomes Law in the Universe? Because we, with our limited mind, cannot conceive, we cannot understand another mental level, which could be superior or inferior to us, so how could we understand God? Life was given to us so that we live it. We did not offer us a life, God did. It belongs to God, so only God can decide when we must die. Yes, that's true. God is love, and I, a mere woman, am trying to defy love, the Supreme Love, which I want so much! To come into my life, to comfort me with its tender and understanding lights. By killing myself, I'm denying this particular thing: love. I need love, I need God! I feel like shouting from the bottom of my lungs: "Where are You, God, my Lord? I need you, I need you so much! You are Love. I need love, tenderness and kindness. Lord, give me the power to keep fighting, to become a winner, once for all. Don't leave me, Lord! Come into my wandering soul who needs You so much!" I will refuse the suicide. Not because I don't have the courage to do it, but because I'm not allowed to do it, because my life does not belong to me. I would become a kind of thief, I would steal my own life. Where could I hide it afterwards? So that no one could find it, not even God, the Love? I think this would be the most horrible theft I could ever commit. I need God. I need His spiritual light to illuminate my way on the dark paths of life. I need His love! How could I steal from someone who's offering me love, light, protection?! Wouldn't this deed of cowardliness be worse than the fear of death? Wouldn't it be the meanest action of my life? I'm so crazy! Irene, who could you ever consider to kill commit suicide?! What for? For the Gorilla? For the Gangster? I think neither of them couldn't dream of a greater victory. I must hang on. Lord, help me! I need Your help so much right now.

I'm going to walk home, where I'll meet my mother. I'm on my way. I greet some people I know. I caught the bus in the station. I'm lucky. Otherwise, I would have waited for at least ten minutes. Today, I'm not in the mood for waiting. I can't stand to wait, but it is worse when I'm waiting for the Math lectures to finish. I got to the station where I have to get off. I'm near my house. A few more steps. I reach the door. I open. I hang my coat on the hallstand. Yes, it couldn't be different. My mother is in the kitchen. I think she is making coffee, I can smell it ... I don't like coffee. It's bitter. I greet her. She forgets to answer me. She pretends she did hear me. I repeat my greeting in a louder voice, maybe this way she will hear me. Finally, she says "hi", in a bored voice. I go first:

"I would like to talk to you about something today, if you have a moment for me."

"Did they ask you for money at school again? Maybe you want to go on a trip?"

You should know that I don't have money for all kinds of tomfooleries you are dreaming of, when you have nothing better to do."

"No, this is not about money, it's something else. The Gangster ... sorry! ... the

headmaster of the high school asked me to let you know that he would like to talk to you in personal about I don't know what matters."

"Oh", says mother, "if they don't beg through children any more, the do it openly. How much money do they need?"

"I don't think that they need money!" I raised my voice.

"Then, what's the reason, young lady?"

"What do you mean? What reason?" I ask absent-minded.

"The reason?!" asks mother in a pathetic and ironical voice.

"I fell out with the Mathematics teacher" I answer harshly.

"With the Mathematics teacher? We don't like Mathematics at all, as far as I know."

"Yes, yes ..."

"What do you mean yes? Say: yes, I don't like Mathematics!"

"I don't like Mathematics!"

"Do you dare answer back to me??" says mother, threatening me. "You are a scoundrel! I've always known that. I've lost so many good matches because of you. I sacrificed myself for you, and now you are defying me like I'm nothing?! There is no other scoundrel like you in all Dallas!"

"I never said you were a nothing", I reply.

"So I'm not a nothing, what am I then?" my mother asks, visibly irritated.

"You are my mother and I would like to be able to talk to you."

"Look at this, the princess! Now she wants to dialogue."

"Yes, I want dialogues." I stood up. Never in my life have I defied her like I'm doing now. Today is the day when I want to make a change in my life. I need a change, but a real change, not only smattering.

"Whom can I have a di-a-logue with?!? A person like you, who ruined my life?!"

With you?! I have never understood why I gave birth to you. You look just like that wretch father of yours. A rascal like no other!"

"Why did you sleep with him if he was such a rascal?" I told her feeling very brave. Anyway, I didn't care what was going to come ... I knew that she couldn't throw me out of the house precisely because she paid a smaller rent because of me. Thanks to me, she also received the governmental house. It a house given by the Government and the rent and housekeeping costs are rather symbolical.

"How can a wretch like you ask me why I slept with one or another??" she is pissed of by my boldness.

"I want to have a dialogue", I repeated. "Even though you don't like the fact that you couldn't fuck one or another because of me, I still want to have a dialogue."

"With you? Never!" she answers furious.

"Oh, yes! You will! Today I've torn the Gorilla's character to rags. That's the reason you are invited by the Gangster, in other words, the headmaster."

"You, wretch! You, wretch! Why did you turned me into ridicule? Why do I have to suffer all these? A poor woman like me? Why am I cursed by God to be forced to tolerate your presence every day?"

"Not only that you will tolerate me every day, but, from now on, you will talk to me? You will answer me, not in this base manner as you are doing now or as you did each time, but you will dialogize, you queen, misunderstood by the guys who won't fuck poor you!!! Next time I receive my scholarship, I'll buy you a vibrator. The skin on your fingers got dull of so much masturbation!"

She come to me and slaps me. She pulls me by my hair. This time I pull her hair. I hit her hard, hard, hard ... The image changes. I'm somewhere on the shore of an ocean. I'm alone. I got lost. I don't know what I am doing here. The view is idyllic,

wonderful. I can hear the sound of a waterfall, lost somewhere in the jungle. From time to time it is interrupted by the roaring of the waves. I feel great, I wish I could live here for the rest of my life. I feel I am loved. I wake up in a room. It has bars at the windows. I'm walking to the door. It is made of metal and it has a small, latticed window. There is nothing but a mattress in the room. Only now I notice! My hands are tied to my back, in a long sleeved shirt. Oh, Lord! It is a strait jacket. I don't know how I got here. I kick the massive metal door. I keep shouting for help. The door opens. There is a stout man in front of me, dressed in white. He asks me how I feel. Of course I feel awful, since I wake up in such a place, without having the slightest idea how I got here. I tell him all these. He asks me to wait because he will call a doctor to see me. I beg him not to leave me there or, at least, to leave the door open. He tells me something about the regulations. "OK", I answer, if only the doctor came immediately. The minutes are passing by. The door opens again. The doctor appears with two nurses and that stout guy.

"Well, how do you feel, my dear?" asks the doctor, with a prying look.

"How do you think a person who wakes up in a strait jacket, locked up in a cell like this, feels?!"

"Why have you been brought here? Can you tell us what happened?"

"I don't know anything, doctor."

"Loosen the jacket!" says the doctor. The stout guy unties my jacket. "She shall be transferred in a free ward, for further investigation."

Here I am in a mental hospital. My diagnosis hasn't been determined yet. They have run all kinds of tests and psychological tests on me. I am invited to the psychologist. He is in front of me now; he asks me all sorts of questions that I find idiot. I answer him. He asks me again about my parents, as if I hadn't told him a thousand times before that I don't have a father and I'm not getting along with my mother. The psychologist looks into my eyes and asks me:

"But how do you dialogize with your mother, do you love her, do share your secrets or your relationship is completely cold?"

I feel sick again, I feel I'm trembling. How can I dialogize, dialogize ... di-a-logize?

... I wake up again tied up in the room where I was when I first came here. Now I know where I am and what I have to do. I ask to see the doctor.

"Irene! Can you hear me? It's me, Sorin!"

"Yes, Sorin, what do you want?"

"I wish you could feel the love I offer you. I wish you could feel that you don't need to dialogize with your mother, that you can do it with me. That I can substitute both the love of your father and the love of your mother. You don't need to dialogize with anybody.

You are as accomplished and loved as possible. You know how much I love you, how much I need you. It's so good to have a child. Don't accept your mother, don't accept what she thinks of you, as a child. A mother should love her child, she should not hate him. That's what nature and God wanted, as a psychical law on Earth. You must protect your child, love him, accept his existence even beyond your grave, beyond feeling and illness and pain.

Why do you want to cause your child the same psychical traumas your mother caused you?

Try to collect your thoughts, to find yourself inside you. To feel the joy of spring, when the trees are in blossom; the happiness of feeling peace and fulfillment in life. All these are nothing as related to the true love. My love to you, your love to me, our love to our child. Feel my love, feel your child's love to you! Feel the piercing air of life, scented by the love and tenderness we offer you! Be lenient to us, forgive us if we did

something wrong. Deny any negative thought connected to the word "dialogue", any pain, frustration or alienation related to this word. To dialogize is wonderful. We would like so much to dialogize with you, to understand you, to love you. Try to see figures as something that is alive, as something real, positively. The figures are not the ones that bring bad luck or control our lives, in a certain manner. They are just representations of some things. They have a good soul if the things or objects or phenomena that they represent are benefic. We need figures so much! Remember that even the happiest moments in your life had a date, which was represented by figures."

"I remember some happy moments, Sorin!"

"Will you eventually be able to deny dialogues and figures?"

"I'm happy, Sorin", said Irene who was in a visible trance. "Dialogues, figures, they are all turning round in my head. I have to chase them away. I'm afraid, but they represent my happiness too. Dialogue with WHOM and the WHAT do the figures represent? They must exist as such. They are not monsters!"

I can finally hope that Irene will go on the right direction, that she can be cured.

These WHOM and WHAT are, in fact, the key that her subconscious could use to open the door that separates it from our reality. I finally got to the key! This key will open the heavy and rusty, old and stuck gates of the Dialogues and Figures.

Chapter 7

Schizophrenia, in its whole, is based on pronounced abstracting of some phenomena. The question is whether Irene will be able to become really aware of the significance of this "Dialogue, with whom?" and "What figures?" The mental disorder began as a complete lack of affectivity from her mother, doubled by severe pressure. Now I have to inoculate as much affectivity as possible from my part. I have to help her fight her obsessions, transform them into something that won't be present in her daily life, something that won't hurt her in any way. I would like to wake her up from the trance, to see what would be the impact with the real life, but suddenly some questions cross my mind, like a lightning: "What if Irene will become the cold layer again? What if the obsession of the dialogues and figures will grow blurred and, most important, her total crisis of identity will continue?" I was obsessed with those questions. I learned that technique of hypnosis, of exploration inside the subconscious, of finding, just like an explorer or a scholar, the key to a line or to a new discovery, and I did it just for her. I had the strange feeling that I'm a polar explorer, who wants to reach one of the poles of the Earth, no matter which one, but I didn't know which itinerary to choose, what to pack or what tent to take with me. Suddenly, I have an illumination and I find the key to everything I want to do: a much more thorough map of the polar lands. The problem was whether I'll be able to really open the heavy padlocks of Irene's disease, with these keys. What if they are so rusty that not even their own key can open them? Then, could everything be irretrievably lost? I have again the feeling that I'm a polar explorer who fights the frosts, the snow drifts, the ribs, the snow storms, all the unbearable calamities, without despairing, without pegging out, conscientiously following his way every day,

like a brave warrior, in a deaf war he fights against the forces of nature. I don't think that reaching the promised goal is everything. Maybe it's also the joy of fighting; this way of living your life more intensively, of feeling what you usually find almost impossible.

"What do you feel right now, Irene?"

"A state of beatitude, something angelical, I cannot explain what exactly. I am walking on a path, somewhere in a forest. It is morning, a nice sun, butterflies everywhere, I can see some mushrooms, I get to a clearing. It is wonderful here, the grass is green and silky. I lay down on the grass, facing the sky. I'm watching the sky. It is clear. An intense blue, not even a little cloud over my head. I can feel life and time roaring around me. I can feel how a moment can become eternity, and a life lived by a human being can become a moment."

"Can you tell me what your job is, Irene?"

"My job? Do you think that a certain job matters in this wonderful, still world? Do you think I want to have a job? This would be the last thing I want from life."

"Does the lawyer position sound familiar to you?"

"Why won't you leave me alone in this fairy-tale landscape, to stay here in peace? Why do you want me to remember things I cannot remember? Things that I don't even know whether they existed?"

"I know it is very difficult for you, there, to talk about this subject. But yet, please, make an effort and tell me what the word 'lawyer' tells you?"

"Right now, nothing. Absolutely nothing."

"Well, Irene, you have been and still are a lawyer."

"I am? So what?"

"Do you remember any law suit you participated in?"

"I'm not sure whether I was a lawyer, so I definitively cannot remember any law suit."

"Please, Irene, you must remember about your last client!"

"I'm trying to concentrate, but can't. I have a kind of amnesia that wouldn't let me.

Ask me some other time, not now."

"When can I ask you again, Irene?"

"In another existence."

"Why in another existence and not now?"

"Something keeps me from tackling this subject. I feel a kind of fear only when I think of it."

"Fear or amnesia, Irene?"

"Both."

Only now did I start to realize how perfidious this disease was. It felt that I dangled about it and that I wanted to chase it away from Irene's conscious and it, the wretch disease, was trying to protect itself with all possible means, in every possible way. It's like it sensed that I wanted to defeat it. The disease became suspicious. It knew that, once I get to the idea of legal profession with Irene, once I get to her last client, there is only one more step to her husband and to Mark, her son. The disease tried to steal Irene's soul, like a footpad. You thief, wretch schizophrenia, I'm going to get you some day! I'll go to any lengths. I must find a logic in Irene's conscious. Something that she would accept, that would become a kind of guiding light. A weapon against the disease.

"Do you believe in God, Irene?"

"I do."

"What does God mean to you?"

"God is the inner peace, the joy, the love, the absolute, He is the Creator. The light of the summer, the immaculate coloring of the autumn, the ocean, the mountains, the

Earth, the Universe, everything is God, created by God."

"You pointed out well, Irene, the inner peace. Why these two words?"

"Because with God's help, we'll find the true peace inside us, a peace that has the power to chase away the dark thoughts."

"There are light thoughts too, Irene."

"What kind of thoughts are those?" Irene asked.

"These are thoughts of love, purity, truth, compassion, happiness ..."

"I see, Irene. Don't you think there is an interference between dark thoughts and good thoughts?"

"Interference? I don't understand, be more explicit!" she told me.

"The thoughts of love, truth, compassion, can become dark from positive. Love can get another shape, opposed to altruism, full of jealousy, like it often happens because, when we love a person, a thing, we want that person or thing to belong to us and nobody else. Such a love is no longer a positive thought, but it is a dark one. The Truth, in its relativity, can get an infinite numbers of shapes. Nobody, except God, knows what the real hidden face of the Truth is. Do you agree?"

"To be honest, I do! What are you actually driving at, Sorin?"

"Be patient and you will find out! Why are you so curious?"

"I feel a kind of indefinite fear. A kind of arduous fight in my being, waged on it. Like a beginning of a civil war of my own being, waged somewhere within its depths, which are obscure to me. I feel you are trying to create a logic, which determines me not to submit, even though it tends to prove all its demonstrative elements. I don't know why, Sorin! Help me! There is something that makes me believe that we are playing a game of chess, and you are making three or four moves before the Event takes place. Now I realize where this Fear, this ancestral Fear, comes from! It all comes from logic, from your anticipated chess moves, from the fear that an entire logical system might fall down because there is Something that won't allow me to accept it. And, yet, I'm afraid that you might win this game of chess, that you might take my pawns and my king, which is White or Black, I don't even know anymore. Everything is relative in this world, isn't it, Sorin?"

"It is relative. But if we get to a certain level we can discern the difference between White and Black."

"It is painfully true, Sorin."

"Tell me, please, does the name of Mark sound familiar to you?"

"Mark, Mark, Mark", Irene whispered in trance.

"Is he a White piece, or a Black one?" I asked her.

"Oh, God! He is a black piece who declares me direct war! I'm in danger of losing many pieces because of this Mark" Suddenly, Irene becomes very nervous. Her body got spasmodically strained, her eyes, half open, were gazing at the ceiling, with the pupils up to her forehead, so that I could see only the white of her eyes. Suddenly a dark thought crossed my mind and induced me that strange sensation of violent fright that you can feel on your spine. I almost panicked. "Relax", I told myself a few times. I have got to calm down, or the situation will get out of control. I have to find my logic and to act as soon as possible, before the ship sinks. Her disease was fighting against me.

"I'll take away the piece named Mark. Here, I took it away, Irene", I shouted, trying to calm her down. "Look, Irene, the piece is in my hand. It is black, just like you said; you are playing with the white ones. Look how Your King" – actually, your disease, but I didn't tell her that – "eliminated the Mark piece."

After a pretty long while, Irene's crisis started to grow blurred. Her pulse became normal again and she told me:

"I've never seen such a threatening piece on the chessboard. It was monstrous. It

would have definitively defeated me."

"How can you be so sure that it would have defeated you, Irene?"

"It was too dark, too threatening!" she said raising her voice.

"But you told me you believed in God."

"Yes. I do."

"Can't God give you the inner peace?"

"Maybe."

"Then, concentrate on God, feel Him in your soul, feel the kindness and love He surrounds you with! Relax!"

"It is great!" says Irene. "I'm close to something I cannot define, like love, hope, peace. I wish I could stay here, Sorin!"

"That's exactly what I want you to do! Try to stay there, try not to walk away from that place! How about playing a chess game there?"

"A chess game?"

"Yes, Irene, a chess game! You have to admit that the pieces can only be White, which means good, if they are near God."

"So you are suggesting we are playing white against white, Sorin?!"

"Exactly. Now you get it, Irene!"

"How can we differentiate between your Whites and my Whites?"

"With God's help. His Will and His Kindness make everything possible, wouldn't you agree, Irene?"

"I agree. Each of us will know which are his Whites by God's Will."

"Now, Irene, pay attention! This time I will open the game with a simple pawn, a simple memory."

"Let me see your move."

"Two young people meet in a greyhound that was coming from Los Angeles and going to Dallas. She hasn't turned twenty yet, he is twenty-one. She is wearing a light pink overcoat, he has a threadbare blue jeans suit. They are students, somewhere in Dallas. They happen to sit next to each other. He asks her whether she is cold. It was raining. A cold winter rain in El Paso. She answers that she is a little cold. He tells her that it will much colder when they reach the mountains, a few hours later. She tells him that she's coming from Salt Lake. He asks her whether she went to ski. They are laughing. He looks into her eyes. She looks down modestly. He looks into her eyes again. She doesn't look away this time. They look at each other with rapture and the hours pass by, they reach Pecos. He covers her with his dirty blue jeans coat. Only then they realize that they don't even know each other's names, that they don't know anything about each other. She tells him that her father died, which was not true. He tells her that his parents are some rich fellows in San Diego and that he is a student in Dallas, which was not true either. She tells him that she loves and respects her mother, only that she doesn't have time to call and see her very often, because a single woman cannot make much money, which was not true either except for the fact that she didn't have much money. He tells her that he owns a brand new Jaguar which he keeps in the garage lest he should drive it a lot, which couldn't be more far from the truth. They were dreaming. This was the only thing that was damn true. It was also true that they liked each other, that they will see each other again in the future although they both knew that the talk they had in the bus was ninety percent dreams, but it didn't matter, the important thing was that they grew to love each other. They hired an apartment together, somewhere in Carlton, a district in Dallas, where he would have liked to stay for ever."

"I understand the pawn now", said Irene. "But where do you move it?"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean, move it in another square."

"Oh, another square", I repeated as if I had just remembered that a move in this game represents an issue, a square means an issue.

"So, Sorin, your move is ..."

"I would rather think about it for a minute, Irene."

"OK, Sorin, I'll wait patiently." What if my next move would bring about a new crisis? I can feel a chill of fear.

"My move is in this square."

"Meaning, Sorin?"

"The names of the two young people are: Sorin and Irene. Now it's your turn to make a move, Irene", I told her, hoping for the best.

"Yes, it's my turn. All the pieces are White, so I cannot harm myself", said

Irene. "God is by my side."

"In deed, Irene, the pieces cannot cause you any harm. They are White and God is with you!" I replied raising my voice a little. This time I felt I was one step away from success. No, there was no way I could lose. I think I feel the same way the alpinists feel when they are a few meters away from the peak. It's a plenitude feeling, mixed with hope, with desire to succeed and all these together are a drop of what is called the grandeur of human being. I wonder if Irene is aware of the significance of the two young people's names, of what this move, through which I opened the game, means for her own life. I wonder if she realizes that this not the first time our destinies play chess, that it happened so many years ago, in a beautiful American winter, which we would have liked to last forever and which brought love into our souls that were thirsty of dreams and full of hope.

Irene told me how she took a pawn and raised it in the air.

"I hold this pawn tight in my hand and I'm trying to find a square, a place to put it.

I find it so difficult since all the pieces in this game are of the same color: White. I feel a kind of warm disappointment, yes, yes, that's the right word for what I feel right now: warm disappointment. I cannot say why exactly, but it is a kind of indefinite painful memory that dangles about me."

"God is by your side, Irene, try to remember."

"God is by my side and the disappointment vanishes away. Only the spiritual warm of a memory stays. I must ask you, God, to tell me something about this memory", said Irene raising her voice pathetically. Se stopped. We both stopped talking. I didn't stop her. The minutes were passing by one after another.

Finally, Irene said:

"White against the White, me against myself, who wins? My God!" shouts

Irene. "That man, that young man in the greyhound was actually – he was a sort of, a sort of ex lover. I don't understand any more. I feel the world turning up side down with me. It can't be true. Were there "Irene and Sorin" once? They were happy, they loved each other, yes, they loved each other very much. Sorin, little by little I'm beginning to find you again. Am I delirious? How could I be that Irene!? A Voice coming from nowhere mockingly tells me that I'm not that Irene, that Irene was a long time ago, she has nothing to do with me, yet, something makes me believe that I am that Irene, the Voice grows more and more threatening, more hysterical. I want to defy it, to run away from the Voice, to stop hearing it. I feel that the drums of my ears are breaking, it shouts again and again that I am not that Irene, that Irene was a long time ago, she has nothing to do with me, but yet, something makes me believe that I am that Irene, the Voice grows more and more threatening, more hysterical. I want to defy it, to run away from the Voice, to stop hearing it. I feel that the drums of my ears are breaking, it shouts again and again that I am not that Irene, that I'm a completely different person.

I'm starting not to believe it. The Voice turns into a feeling of embarrassment, yes, of embarrassment. I should be embarrassed, I should be ashamed for daring to think I'm that Irene. It wants me to feel as if I were walking naked on the street, as if I had to make sex with the most rascal tramp on the streets where everybody could see us. There is something that makes me fight. I don't know what exactly, but I also have to defeat these bad feelings. I'm thinking about God, I believe that God is the One who gives me strength in these moments. The One who really helps me. I call God from within my soul. I can feel Him hearing me, coming to help me.

The Voice and the Feeling disappear little by little, chased away by an inner peace, the rays of God's love bracingly reverberate upon me. All I can say is that I thank you, Lord! I thank you for helping me find myself through the amnesic abysses where I had got lost. *I am Irene, Sorin Cerin's love.*"

"You are Irene, my love" I answered. It was the first time I was crying after many years. I don't know why, but for me crying doesn't necessarily symbolize sadness, but rather a way of settling down the emotions, a sort of valve of the intense feelings. I came near Irene's face. My lips touched her pale lips. It has been so many years since I kissed her. Luckily, I remembered that I was talking to a person who was in trance. I was looking at her limp hands. I couldn't believe that I found myself in her subconscious. I was afraid that, when she woke up, she might turn become that cold person that the disease turned her into. It was for the first time after so many years when she was aware of her own identity, even though she was not aware that she also was a wife and a mother.

Now I know for sure that I'm on the right direction. I know that my efforts were not in vain, that God was always by our side in this trial.

I was surprised that Irene also wanted to fight her disease, to step out in the light, at the surface, in spite of the fact that the Voices and Feelings stopped her. She was trying to chase them away, realizing that all they were caused by a great thief who stole her soul, little by little. That thief was the Schizophrenia. In a word, she wanted to find Herself, the real Irene and not the sick Irene, the one who loved and build a family, the one who achieved something in the society, integrating in it, and not the dissonant Irene, who accepted delirium as reality. We both fought hard to find ourselves again. I was looking at her hands obediently laying in my palms. I was afraid that she might wake up, I wouldn't have wanted these hands that I loved and I still love to become cold and impersonal, the hands of the lawyer and that's it.

"I would like to ask you something, Sorin", said Irene.

"Please, ask me", I answered somehow fearing that everything I had built might fall down. I'm aware that all it took was the slightest emotional gust of wind and the entire edifice could collapse. Of course I would have started all over, again and again, until I would have succeeded. This time I was convinced that once I reached this level in her subconscious, nothing could hold me back any more.

"An inner, unseen force tells me that to continue the Chess Game we started. We only made one move each", said Irene.

"Why do you necessarily want to continue this game? Does the Voice tell you to, or is it just your desire to see who the winner is?"

"I want to see who's going to win, Sorin! Yes, it is true, the Voice asks me to continue. So, do you agree?"

"Of course, my dear." This time I understood, the one who didn't agree was not Irene, but the Schizophrenia.

The Schizophrenia wanted to fight a duel with its most dreaded arms: emotions, sensations, feelings, desires, hopes, fear, terror, anxiety, delirium, pain, alienation. And all these on the battle field chosen by her: the Land of the Mind.

The Schizophrenia wanted to continue this dull, cruel, hidden Chess Game, in which the winner takes it all, including the soul. In which the one who is defeated loses everything, including his soul.

The game was by tooth and nail, a game in which, paradoxically, we were the protagonists, me and Irene, two people who loved each other, except that Irene was nothing else but a rebellion of this disease. I knew that I was fighting the Schizophrenia and not Irene.

Why would Schizophrenia want to continue the Chess Game? It was not defeated at its first moves.

What a merciless disease! It wants to play to its last breath, it won't acknowledge defeat until the last piece on the chessboard is lost. I knew that Irene's soul depended on my intelligence, on my ability and agility, that I couldn't possibly lose this game, even though I never liked chess, this time I don't think it is boring or that it the game of those who have nothing else to do.

For the first time, I realize that chess is the sport of the soul and between its parties there are illusions, hopes, dreams, but also disappointments and defeats.

Don't we play chess, ever since we are born, with our own hopes, wishes, feelings?

Is this the way we are building our destiny that, paradoxically, was GIVEN to us!?

The same paradox as the one of diversity in oneness; it's the paradox of the chess that we are playing in life, trying to build ourselves a destiny that is in fact shaped by God ever since we are born; so the paradox is between the chess game of life and prediction. If the first time I moved a pawn just to show Irene the wrong way her soul took, this time the disease won't unchain her until I defeat it for good.

"So, Irene, our pieces are of the same color, do you agree?"

I asked her this question hoping that she would agree, because I knew what it meant to have pieces of different colors, a few minutes ago.

"I don't!" she exclaimed.

"Why not?"

"Because the Voice wants only colorless pieces."

"Ask your Voice, Irene, why she agrees to have colorless pieces on a chessboard."

"So that the defeat is complete, a Self defeat, with the same pieces."

"Ask your Voice, Irene, if your defeat is also mine."

"It is, says the Voice."

"Why?"

"Because the pieces are all colorless", said Irene.

How treacherous the Voice is! It was trying to defeat me even though I would have won, because we would have won against us. If the pieces had been of different colors, the plan would have changed, but I don't think that we would last to the end of the game because the treacherous disease wouldn't let her finish. Seeing that it could be defeated and that it could lose Irene from its monstrous arms, it would be capable of anything.

"Ask your Voice if it agrees to play with pieces of different colors. I mean black and white."

"No", Irene answers. "The Voice tells me that she definitively doesn't."

"Why not?" I answer with a question.

"Because You cannot belong to opposite parties, you are not allowed to defeat each other, because there is going to be a winner only if you don't win, which means that you will never be able to defeat the Voice. That's what the Voice is telling me, shouting it to my ear."

"Ask your voice again, Irene, how should the pieces be so that we can play, what color, and what do I have to do to be able to win?"

"The Voice is telling me that the pieces should be colorless, neither white, nor black, and, in order to win, you will not be able to play checkmate and you will not be able to remove the last piece from the chessboard of life."

"What do I have to do in order to win, Irene? Concretely, what do I have to do?"

"The Voice tells me that in order to win **you will have to allow to be defeated by wining and to win by being defeated**, that's the key of this Chess Game of life. **You will never win by wining.**"

"Frankly, Irene, I don't really understand, better said, I don't understand at all. If I get to a checkmate against the Voice, I'm not a winner?"

"No!"

"If she defeats me, I'm a winner?"

"No."

"If I don't defeat it or be defeated, how can I become a winner?"

"You have been told that before, Sorin: win by being defeated or be defeated by wining. Do you accept that?"

"No, because I don't know what I am supposed to do, Irene. Please, ask your Voice what I am supposed to do."

"The Voice tells me that it cannot tell you what you are supposed to do. Accept it as it is, or consider yourself defeated before the game starts."

"I cannot consider myself defeated, no matter what, I want to start this Chess Game anyway, in spite of the fact that the Voice doesn't want to tell me the rule of the Game, a rule by which we could establish who the winner is."

"The Voice tells me that the rule is something you will have to find yourself. And this is the mystery of the game. Do you accept?"

I did know what to do. I'm sure I would have failed if I tried again to succeed in finding out a certain rule from the Voice. Then what? How was I supposed to play a Chess Game without rules? Yes, I'm going to ask that.

"How can we play a Chess Game without rules?" I ask Irene, hoping for an answer.

"On the contrary, Sorin, chess, just like life, is based on well established rules but you will have to discover them yourself, this the real Chess of Life, do you accept, Sorin, or shall we drop it?"

What if I don't accept, what if it is a trap of the Voice through which it tries to draw me into a whirl where it could defeat me hopelessly? What if the common denominator I reached with Irene, the one of accepting the collocation: "Irene, Sorin Cerin's lover" is not a conquered peak and the Voice, once awoken from the trance, will lose it for good? I don't even know what to understand.

I better ask her:

"Tell me, Irene, if I refused to play this chess game, could you accept that "Irene, Sorin Cerin's lover"?" Suddenly Irene becomes nervous again, she started to breathe more and more quickly saying:

"If Sorin doesn't want to fight for Irene, if Sorin is a coward, I wonder in Sorin really exists ..."

"He exists!" I interrupted her. Sorin will fight for Irene to the end. He will accept the Chess Game. She recovered little by little. Now I understood that Irene needed Sorin to save her, she was aware or, better said, she knew in her subconscious that she was not in a very good condition. She felt she was in an Ivory Tower, which is again very important, where from she wanted to be saved by her wandering knight named Sorin.

"Let your Voice know that I accept the Chess Game, Irene."

"The voice says that we should start."

"Have the moves of the two paws been canceled? So "Irene, Sorin Cerin's lover" is also canceled?"

"Yes, Sorin, that's what the Voice is telling me. We start a new game, and the last one. All the pieces are colorless."

"I agree, Irene."

"Who makes the first move?" I ask.

"There are not such pre-established rules, I've told you that! Pawn to C five, the Voice moved. Colorless pawn to C five. So the Voice attacks, it moved in front of the bishop." It wants to frighten me by instantaneously going in front of Irene. Now I know that if she woke up from the trance she would become the same impersonal and cold woman as she used to be, with such a profound identity crisis that she wouldn't even recognize me. A small fissure could have appeared because in its wish to dominate, the Voice exposed itself, leaving the bishop uncovered, and this one is the existence itself and the quiescence of the Voice who has probably existed in the world since the appearance of humanity and will leave with it.

"Irene, my dear Irene ..." I said.

"I want you to play, Sorin, play, play, play, play."

"This game of the Voice!" I said.

"This game of life and death, of illusion and disillusion, of the autumn leaves and of the spring leaves, of poetry, Sorin, of true poetry rising from dialogues, from di-alogues, Sorin, between me and the Voice, between me and you, between feeling and orgasm.

Yes, Sorin, however strange that it might seem to you, the orgasm brought us all in this world, this ephemeral Maya helped us come to life, want to live, die, dream, suffer. To suffer, to be jealous, to kill, to lash ourselves out of false chastity, it means to kill ourselves little by little. That is why I accept to run away from a certain reality and to embrace my Voice more than anything, more than you, Sorin, because the Voice does not accept the Illusion in its existence, while you do. The orgasm is an Illusion, a Maya, just like love, the love that I'm afraid of in an existence like yours, Sorin, I'm afraid that any love lasts only for small period because boredom occurs and things become normal"which in fact kills me, a person who wants the absolute in everything". Forgive me, Sorin, for being so absolutist. I prefer the Voice which chases away the existence of any illusion, where everything can become absolute and true. Tell me, Sorin, can you live sex and love in their profoundness at the same time? You can get laid all day long with the one you love, but the percentage of living sex and love in the same time is null because I want endless orgasm. I think of the Voice as my benefactor because everything is possible in my reality, especially the absolute I told you about. I'm afraid and sick of your reality, Sorin, I wish I would never get there any more. Try to avoid me, to leave me alone, to disappear from my life, from my existence for good. I want you to be aware that the Voice is my husband and my lover, that the Voice is everything I could wish for in this world, that I only find peace and hope with the Voice."

"As far as I know, Irene, we are in the middle of a Chess Game, aren't we?"

I asked her this question hoping that I could put a stop to the delirium about the Voice. At least by the right I have as a player in this chess game, I should try to continue the game. I was horrified by the mean tactic the Voice used to attack me, by trying to mix the orgasm with love. I knew that it was time for me to make a move, otherwise who knows what rules it could make up on the chessboard, in its attempt to declare me defeated. It was for the first time I heard about such thing as poetry of orgasm, I wonder if it really exists. Is the false chastity of the society padder about in beds, around this poetry?, recite Goethe on the street and oral sex in bed with bewitched Flute? Then how is the space between poetry and obscenity delimited? This is where

the Voice wanted to trap me. It was right when it said that this chess game obeyed no rules, but, yet, it was subjected to one general rule: the relativity of the frontiers, in this case, between moral and immoral, between obscene and poetry. I made up my mind on the instant. I will move a colorless pawn on the right side of the chessboard on position H four. Why? I want to free my castle, this guard of the chessboard. I want to strictly delimit the nonsense of the endless orgasm, with whom the Voice tempted Irene, and sex.

"I cannot fight against you, Irene. I think it would be an act of folly, since you are so close to the Voice."

"Even if you fought against me, I don't think you could provide any arguments with your miserable castle, which is trying to enclose my thoughts by drawing frontiers all over the place."

"I'm not saying that you are wrong, Irene, but from my point of view, I feel that we need frontiers even in an infinite space. I think that frontiers are an intrinsic part of our life, of our will, even of desires and hopes, which we often think are endless. Tell, my dear, if those delimitations didn't exist, how could we make the difference between right and wrong, between love and hate, between what we want from desire and hope and where we want or don't want them to go. Do you think that the orgasm will be equally intense with the Voice? Do you think that, being with the Voice, love will be one with the orgasm so that you can live them both distinctly, eternally and equally intense? I can assure you that you won't! What would it be if we feel a sensation intensely and eternally, I'll tell you, my dear, this sensation would disappear, it wouldn't exist any more. Any phenomenon takes place within a temporal frontier, here, on Earth. By trying to endlessly extend a sensation it is like you would eat the same kind of food over and over again. Even if at the beginning you found the food delicious, in time, it will become an ordeal. No one says you should not have an intense orgasm, you should not love, but still you will have to accept them within certain limits, to resign yourself to them, so that you can really feel them more intensely afterwards. *We should resign ourselves to limits all our lives so that we can surpass them, this way we can ascend, step by step, limit by limit, until we succeed to ascend endlessly and reach the infinite by climbing on limits and not by ignoring them.* I think this is another rule of this chess game, which I discovered!"

"That's right, Sorin, the Voice tells me that you are a pretty good player so you can already consider yourself as a winner although you haven't won yet."

"How treacherous this Voice is, Irene. No, I refuse to think of myself as a loser or a winner, because your soul is somewhere on a land, with the Voice. I know that the smallest mistake can make me lose everything, perhaps definitely and irreparable. Haughtiness is a rule in this game, a rule that belongs only to the totally defeated, to the weak. And, at this point, a limit is needed. If you think of yourself as above a certain limit than you are haughty, and if you stay below it, you become a much more profound person even though not necessarily unselfish, a person who understands that haughtiness is an exponent of self alienating, of human mental alienation. Tell me, Irene, would you be happy feeling as a stranger to yourself? Please, answer me truthfully and don't lie to me just for the sake of winning the Chess Game. Tell the Voice to get to know itself and to find out whether it is a stranger to itself or not. I repeat! I don't want lies, otherwise the entire chess game will collapse annihilating itself, and the chance of being truly defeated will be practically zero."

"Yes, Sorin, you have found out another rule of this game, to be cunning, wicked, but *never lie to yourself*, otherwise the entire edifice would crumble down, the chess game would be gone and you would be just an autumn leaf carried away by a river without any specific destination."

"Yes, I agree, don't lie to yourself, but I want the Voice to answer the question, unless you can, Irene. Tell me, please, when you don't obey some limits, when you are haughty, when poetry tends to become a prolonged orgasm, when sex tends to become poetry and orgy love isn't an alignment of the individual's personality, of the human nature? Isn't that self alienation?"

"The Voice refuses to answer, Sorin"

"The Voice will have to answer me, Irene, because the moving of my castle took place under the auspices of the frontiers' limits, of the infinite, which are only the main attributes of the human being's self alienation when they are seen through self indifference. So, my dear Irene, the Voice will be forced to answer my question: Do we or do we not need limits, are these the attribute of the self alienation, or human personality, which doesn't coexists with them but lives through them?"

"The Voice answers, Sorin, that it coexists with them but it cannot exist through them, that is why she is always searching for never-ending orgasm, for poetry of sex, for haughtiness, for everything that can be absolute or eternal. It is always searching, it is always on a path that leads to them but without finding them because it is a stranger to Itself, trying to find itself through this chess game."

"Running on the path to absolute or eternity without ever embracing it, isn't this an illusion, Irene?"

"Yes, it is an illusion."

"So you will have to admit without denial that your Voice lied when it said, a moment ago, that it doesn't accept illusions, that it lives by denying illusion."

"The Voice tells me that it was a mere cunning, a mere trick."

"A mere cunning or trick, Irene, is still an outrageous lie that the Voice hysterically told me when it saw it was losing ground. I want it to sincerely admit in front of logic that it was a lie!" I cried.

"The Voice doesn't lack logic, Sorin, it cannot obey any logic."

"It is true, Irene, its only logic is the lie."

"No, Sorin!" cried Irene.

"But which one is it, Irene!?" I answered in the same manner.

"Which one? You find the key, Sorin!"

"So, it said it existed outside illusion, right?"

"Right, Sorin" said Irene.

"It said it was running towards absolute, towards eternity?"

"Yes."

"And you admitted that this crazy race is an illusion?"

"Yes."

"This is the key, Irene. I want the Voice to admit that it was under the spell of my move."

"Yes, the Voice admits Sorin, but it is asking you, why you do not state that it lost with this move?"

"Because this chess game can never be lost or won, it is just about finding itself."

"Just about finding itself", Irene repeated after me.

"The one who is really strong is the one that will have the power to find the other one again. The weak will totally alienate from the other one and from himself", I told her as clearly as I could.

"The Voice tells me Sorin, that, according to this logic on Earth and in our souls, you have won, but after all you have no chance of winning because the one that will truly win must first of all defeat the Logic of paradoxes ..."

"The Logic of paradoxes", I repeated.

"That's right," said Irene.

"Can you be more specific?"

"This time, I can. You will have to prove to us why paradox is logical and not illogical. When you will find logic in obeying the limits in order to reach infinity or diversity in uniqueness, plural as unique, you will be able to defeat us. However, you will have to be very careful Sorin because everything, absolutely everything, will be within the context of my life, of my destiny. When you are able to explain the paradox within the already mentioned context, you might win. Now, me and my Voice will move a new colorless chessman on the chessboard of life, we'll move, we'll move", said Irene as if she was in the first grades and she wanted to keep her playmates on hold until she would suddenly give them the final conclusion like a thunder that would make them more vulnerable in defense. "We will play bishop at C seven. I like seven, it's a lucky figure but in the same time it frightens me because it is a figure. The week has seven days. I was somewhere in a hospital. I don't really remember where. I think in Victoria state, in Australia at an aunt's ... I remember I got there because I climbed the historical tower from the mall in the center of Melbourne. I don't know how I got to the top. It's almost impossible to imagine. What I know is that I started sobbing once I got to the top of the historical tower from the mall. Why?

Because by climbing on that tower I would have wanted to reach a peak limit, something that is great and boundlessness. Up there, on the top, I realized that above my head weren't the stars nor the blue sky but the ordinary and impersonal ceiling of the Mall, that above my head is the same ceiling as to those sitting by the foot of the tower.

The pain was even greater as this tower once represented a respectable height in Melbourne, it was some kind of watch tower, where those that had managed to reach the top felt much closer to the sky and not to an impersonal ceiling belonging to the shopping fans. Painful conservation of the past, of some moments that wouldn't, under any circumstance, accept ceilings, even if they were been built out of the most expensive materials.

Imagine how sad things are for this tower that once used to embrace greatness, the boundlessness of the Blue Alps or the Pacific, now, being just a simple object that attracts buyers inside a mall even if it spreads on many streets. I wonder if life is the same, some kind of tower where we think we are invincible, great in hopes, aspirations, ideas and feelings just so that we can become a third aged curiosity on some metropolitan street, being looked at condescendingly by most of the passers-by that have a mall ceiling in there feelings and hopes, like: poor old lady or poor old man. Not knowing that these "poor" people were just like this tower once, with no ceiling above their head to stop them from seeing the stars, or the autumn leaves or the painful buds of spring that remind us of the past leaves that existed once in a life, in a time, in a hope, in an idea, in a dream.

Thus, how many generations of leaves haven't had a much more authentic romance than the one with the ceiling, much more profound feelings of love towards a simple shopping interior with commercial smiles, a poetry of time, of feelings that are not polluted by the exhaust pipes of cars, and why not, even by the famous air conditioning installations so spread in bad commercials with forever naked bodies. Should we count the new trading fashion of feelings too?

You want to hear some sweet words or to tell somebody on the phone about your pain? You pay. You pay your own words that you expect from those around you. All you have to do is to dial a commercial phone number. All the advertisements are full of such phone numbers where, as long as you pay, you get what you want, love substitute, romance, indecent words, everything you want, on condition you pay. If you want to hear words about sex, you call, you pay and you can always experience a platonic sex

party on the phone, spiced with the most horrible perversions. It's all about wanting to dial a number whose advertisement invites you with a false discretion. "Only for you, perversions, or if you want sweet words with sex". Everything for you and just for you, and everything for this amount per minute. Another advertisement said: "Only here you can find a romantic friendship, only here you will pay so this amount per minute". Another advertisement: "Do you want to get laid in as many different ways possible, try me? Just for this amount per minute". I even read an advertisement that announced: "if you want true feelings call us, just for this amount per minute. Pleasure is guaranteed". Tell me if getting out the bishop as soon as possible on the chess table of Life is not a necessity? Tell me if madness isn't normality, but a real normality next to this truth that slowly embraces everything without forgiving anything? Tomorrow or the day after tomorrow I will read through magazines, newspapers and televisions this kind of advertisements: "Do you want to actually go insane? You can do it with us for a couple of minutes for only this amount and ninety-nine cents per minute". Why not go insane for free? Some time from now, my salary will not be enough to pay for an hour of madness. Do you think it's normal to get to a point in a society where you must pay for a little romance, for some words of feelings? Is it a normal society, the one that accepts even the idea of paid love, paid feelings? Admit it, Sorin, is this an abnormal society? A sick, drifting society, walking fast towards self-destruction, towards true collective madness where the absolute king is money, where everything has to do with it, where the purest and noblest of feelings are being stained by this odious monarch – money, through the veins of which it isn't blood that runs, but figures, yes, you heard it right, figures!!! Now maybe you will really understand why I believe the Voice, because the Voice and only the Voice is truly close to me, she doesn't tell me that a chat with her costs this amount of dollars per minute followed by the always present ninety-nine cents, the feelings of the Voice seem pure, real and not because they are for free, perhaps there are moments when I realize that the price I pay in feelings to the Voice is quite higher.

You have to accept Sorin that there are true feelings, even though sometimes I think that the Voice is so close to me in sensations, emotions, hopes, wishes, she's some kind of an alter ego of mine and this lasts not longer than an eternal thunder that feeds the ground with its electricity, giving mother Earth a new hunk of food to get the strength to hold us in her ever older and wrinkled arms.

Oh, mother Earth, even you have become an old lady in the eyes of these true lunatics that ask money for feelings whispered one after another, that don't care about pollution because they prefer a new tire for their car or a plant funnel rather than your clean water and air. They prefer the plastic bottle and large vegetables full of carcinogenic fertilizers rather than the natural things. Even so, there are some guys that have awoken to reality and would prefer natural products instead of the cheap poison, but again this ominous monarch that will take this world to destruction makes its appearance, this apocalyptic beast that is the money. All that is natural is more expensive and less accessible. Industries that pollute are profitable, so they will keep on going because it's not life or the quality of life that matters, nor what they will leave behind to the unborn, it is the money that matters, the gain.

The problem is that this profitability is as evil as it gets, no matter how hard we would try to make it the same with the good forces of the humankind and human personality, it only tricks us without ever being good. What is profitable is not good. What did profitability bring to us, people?

Self-alienation, anxiety. Nobody can deny it, Sorin!

Feelings for money are profitable, paid sex is also profitable, company people that love you all evening long and speak to you of love are also profitable.

We have all become slaves of profitability, machines that are nothing else than small pieces of this huge gearing of frustration that is profitability. Let's say that, by evolving, in time the humankind will be able to face the difference between some attributes that cannot be justified by profitability, like feelings, love, hope, and, last but not least, Sorin.

Can we speak of profitable or non-profitable destinies, Sorin? Can we say this Sorin is not profitable because the person that possesses it is not a banker or someone that has "become" politician or I don't know what big shot in a field or another? Of course not! Profitability is against nature, against the human psychic. If it had been for the benefit of human nature, than nature would have left them all to be driven by the star of profitability. It isn't so. Nature doesn't accept money, therefore it doesn't accept this ruthless fight between Money and Nature, between pollution and purity, between dirt and cleanliness either. It is true that biologically, nature differentiates some people by a law of selection, a law that reflects on other living creatures as well, but this law has nothing in common with Money and financial profitability. Everything is biological. Let's imagine that nature would not oppose money, profit, pollution and would evolve based on a law of financial selection. Everybody would be very rich by birth and the poor would be eliminated.

Every new Sorin would be carefully selected, to become richer and richer, to afford dialing paid phone lines that sell feelings their entire life. Can you tell me, Sorin, how would the society look if it was formed only out of bankers and rich people? A society that has no poor people? Where everyone would be able to buy what they wanted and how much they wanted? Where company ladies, these illusion sellers, would be wealthy? Where Money would rule undisputedly?

I wonder, wouldn't that society of bought illusion be a society of madness? Are we that far away from that society? In a way I can say yes, in another way not.

The ones that can still save humankind from the mental alienation and the anxiety of the society that we live in, are not the rich that can afford to buy as many illusions as they want to, people that, to some extent, are mentally alienated, is the poor, the ones that have not yet crossed this frightening frontier which is money and the power that it gives you when you own it, although this is a false power.

The poor can still experience the idea of a free feeling, as the rich would call it, where the main pillar that sustains the architecture of life is not money, but love, that's why sometimes I feel pity and I look condescendingly to the people that are very rich. They are not happy, they are very sad people when they come back to their senses. Surely, they realize that they don't actually live their lives, that their own lives are illusions, just like the money they possess, a mirage and nothing else, a drug that eventually makes them pass by the moments that had been given to them on Earth not by being alive, but as the living dead, like the drug addicts that live only the illusion, the false sensation that they are powerful forever and not just an ephemeral strength that will accompany them to the grave, the rich live the illusion that they are loved and maybe sometimes they really are, but almost every time this kind of love becomes a tragedy because their life's architecture is based on demand and offer, on a profitability of their guarantees of what they want from life and such a profitability depends on the market.

The market itself is always changing, transforming, there is nothing stable in its essence, which is in total disagreement with the feeling of love that could lead their steps in life. That is why most of the rich are sad people that run after illusions, just like way a thirsty man in desert seeks for water. They believe in paid feelings, they believe in paid love and the sad part is that they are the powerful ones in a society, and they are also rolling the dices as they want trying to bring the laws of the society they rule to

their level of understanding, the illusions and the deceptions, that is why the behavior of the rich sometimes becomes a fashion for the poor, it becomes some kind of trial of living the illusion of the thing you will never be, a banker, for example. We need both the poor and the rich, but what we most need is kindness, love for other people, understanding.

All these must not only be said at meetings related to a subject or another, but they must be made real in everyday life. I am not a communist and I have never accepted communism because it is a social mental alienation taken to its climax, it's a society where everybody tends to be the same, which again is against nature. In communism there isn't even a valve that could create some balance against anxiety, mental alienation and self-alienation of the individual. In communism feelings are not being paid as in the capitalist system's publicity, in communism they are being received by the individual whether he wants it or not, from the most beloved and always brilliant ruler, who, with his great and again always brilliant mind has decided that his conational equals should first of all bear the only, the unshakable and the indubitable feeling which is: love for the beloved ruler, in such a way that there is no need for rich and poor, that it doesn't matter if a person is hurt or starving, he has the indubitable duty to love his ruler till death and more than that, till after death.

This is communism, this is social mental alienation taken to its climax. At least in capitalism, it's the lack of money itself at some level that frees some people, giving them the chance to fully live their lives. They don't really need it, they don't feel the need to spend their own salary on feelings when they know that they can live a more than decent life with that amount of money, and with a little effort they can find feelings for feelings, the way nature has it in its most optimal way of life.

What I have said so far is the more and more advanced stage when which society tends to believe in money as in something that can give them anything, absolutely anything, forgetting though, that some things cannot be bought, and trying even harder to obtain some profitability. Something that cannot be expressed in any way: "loving you is profitable". Is this kind of sentence still love, isn't this way of looking at things going towards mental alienation? I can say it is profitable to buy some kind of merchandise but I cannot say that it is profitable to love you.

Love is not a merchandise, feelings are not merchandises, we are not some merchandise that anybody can buy from I don't know whose dream dealer's stand.

That's why I climbed the tower in the Mall. That's why I shouted from up there: All you living dead come back to life! There is plenty of life for everybody! Come and take life, you living dead, get full of life, is free! It doesn't cost just three dollars and ninety-nine cents, it's free! You can eat as many lives as you wish, until you get full, until you will realize that living is not about buying, or smiling in a commercial way or making publicity, living is about receiving feelings and love and hopes for free.

To live means to be loved, to be happy and to always think of you as a winner.

To live is about loving someone, helping him, understanding him and everything is for free. We are human beings, not merchandises.

Leave the merchandises on the shelves and come here and eat life, eat until your bellies, full of advertisements and feelings made out of synthetic dyes and stabilizers, will burst. Those are feelings of destruction and not of life.

Eat the truly natural food and not deceiving advertisements about the best and the last company with company people that can love you for one evening, can kiss you and invite you to a restaurant for only five hundred dollars and ninety-nine cents. Come and try to receive life, real life! Than a fireman crew came. I don't know how they managed to get the car inside the Mall. All I know is that two guys climbed a high leader that came out of the firemen car. They were dressed as firemen. When they reached me I

asked them if their insanity made them believe the tower is on fire. They said no.

"Than, what are you fools doing up here if it's not on fire?"

"We've come to get you off" answered one of the guys who had a big hat on his head that was partially covering his eyes so I could barely see a part of his face. That was the moment when I first realized that, at the foot of the tower, there was a crowd, some of which were applauding me and some were hooting me.

"Why do you have to get me off? Did I call you here?"

"You have to come with us" answered the other one.

"Look!" I yelled to those from the foot of the tower, "look at these two insane and miserable people whose lunacy makes them think that the tower is burning although I can see no flames, nor the slightest trail of smoke!!!" I screamed as loud as I could.

"These poor insane people dressed as firemen should be taken off immediately.

Nothing is burning here, I can assure you. What do you think these bastards want to put out? The fire of reality, of self-alienating, of anxiety, of the lack of some people's life, most of us? What do these bastards want to put out? Help!!! Help!!! Help!!! They want me to become a living dead like them, they want me to become some kind of rusty leaf carried away on the river of life, help!!! I don't remember what happened next. I woke up at the hospital. There ..."

I interrupted her trying to ask her:

"Why did you move the bishop and not the castle? And if you told me about the tower, if that was some kind of necessity of your life, why didn't you move the tower?"

"Because at first I hoped to move the castle and not the bishop, but when I embraced the tower in my palms, when I felt it alone and sad in my soul, sitting quiet under some Mall ceiling, he, who used to be one of the greatest towers of Melbourne, whose forehead was covered with stars during the summer nights, and whose aura was signed by the South Star, what do you think I discovered? What do you think the proudly tower from old ages had become? As you very well know, a simple trade object who attracts tourists and buyers to see its fall, to trample his memories under the foot, defiling the last moments that separates him from total perishing. Do these moments actually exist? Or has this tower disappeared from among us a long time ago, and now is living as many others like a living dead? Why shouldn't I be one of those living dead, why not? Maybe it would be much easier to live like this. I tried but I don't know why I didn't manage to become a living dead. And what have I got? I found out that being a living dead is insanity, a mental alienation, just like the tower, a living dead. That's why I chose the bishop to be the tower of my life."

"Do you think Irene, that a day will come when the tower will no longer be insane because of the ceiling that keeps him hidden from the South Star?"

"As long as the starry sky will be replaced by a ceiling, I think it will be insane" said Irene.

"What do you think could make the ceiling from above the tower collapse?"

"In any case, not the firemen that come to put out the fire from our souls and nothing else, Sorin. For such a ceiling to collapse, first of all we should fight with ourselves, deny the idea of merchandise souls, and not sell our feelings on a stand. Do you think it will ever be possible?"

"Perhaps in an astral future", I answered to Irene.

"Astral future, why not earthly future?" said Irene.

"Because in every stage of the humankind history that we know there had been merchandise-souls, feelings sold for money, which I think is improper because a feeling is no longer a feeling if it's sold for money. The human soul has more than good parts. We have to accept also the evil side of the soul that is in every one of us. Since we are not perfect we cannot expect the society we form to be perfect.

How would a so-called perfect society look like if every individual was profound, where every one would love honestly, where there would be no trace of false or lying advertisement, where every one would love honestly, where there would be no lie nor hate, nor anguish? A society in which money is forgotten even in the history books of children, where there is no pornography, nor shamelessness, a society that has closed all its brothels, where everyone makes love with each other only as the result of a profound love, with the most sober common-sense, a society in which there are no thieves, no murderers, no bastards.

A society with honest politicians, speaking as sweet as children from the church quire? Do you want such a society Irene, a tower outside any Mall?

A perfect tower with the South Star above its head, with nothing else but sweet words and love whispers, a tower that doesn't care about weather, unbroken by rain, avoided by wind, with the sunrays themselves keeping it cool so that he may stay eternal, with its poetry, where he is. Could that be poetry? We are born to die. You can't tell me life never ends. All that surrounds us will die one day, even the planet we live in will change. Billions of years from now it will be cosmic dust and nothing else, so you cannot ask a mortal tower to be eternal, an imperfect human soul to be perfect. How could you or someone else stand such a perfect society? I will tell you: terrible. Maybe at first you would like it, but eventually the whole perfection would become a hell of imperfection and you would reach the conclusion that by trying desperately to reach perfection you have found the exact opposite in that final station of the train made of your own hopes and dreams.

It's the human nature that makes the human being run continuously towards perfection, but it's just a continuous run and nothing more. The human soul indulges in this situation of always running towards a Fata Morgana that he will never meet, of accepting the illusion as something personalized, something real, but when he would touch Fata Morgana, he would take her in his arms, he would kiss her and make love to her, he would realize that Fata Morgana is a monster with many frightening heads, that the Illusion that has become real is actually Hell. What would we do without illusions? We couldn't exist.

We would come to meet Fata Morgana faster, and anyway, we would never meet her again exactly because of the human nature, nature that accepts this crazy and continuous race all our life long, after a Fata Morgana. This is the true meaning of life.

In a perfect society life would have no meaning, it would self destroy through a mental alienation much more important than there is now in our society.

And I will tell you a very important thing, Irene, a thing I think it's important for you to understand what you deny and what you are running away from. Social mental alienation has not emerged from the evil sides of the human being like wickedness, selfishness, lying, baseness and others, mental alienation is the result of a an extremely fast race towards perfection, towards absolute.

I am sure that the city fathers accepted the placement of the tower inside the Mall in order to protect it from bad weather, actually, to save it. Isn't that a mad race towards perfection? The only chance to make it last longer was to build a ceiling above its forehead. So, the chase after perfection and never ending has reached the Mall. I know you would have wanted this tower to be somewhere outdoors.

Yes, maybe it would have been ideal, but that ideal would have lead to its destruction. Would you have preferred to see a ruin with the wind whistling through it? To see the moon shining upon him with its cold rays in a night when owls sing their lugubrious song in honor of Time? Would you have preferred that the Tower be gone from amongst us, gone even from memories? Would you have preferred that all the

words trapped in between its walls become just a forgotten memory? Tell me, Irene, what kind of perfection do you want? A society in which the rich aren't rich and the poor aren't poor? This is impossible, this can never be. In any society there is need of both social classes, both rich and poor. You've told me of the mental alienation of some guys with money that buy feelings. This is a moment when illusion interferes, illusion that helps us run towards perfection but never reach its hell. I agree with you that all these money paid feelings are nothing but pure wind, a chase after wind, but what would happen to the guy that didn't have the illusion of buying feelings and would realize that he had paid minutes of wind with just three dollars and ninety-nine cents? Do you think that in future he would never dial this number again? I'm telling you he would because he needs the illusion, for him is pure gold, and the gold he owns is probably rusty iron of the worst quality. Society needs wealthy people just as it needs poor people, it's just that some people's mental alienation differentiates from the others not in intensity or length, but first of all as the way it's expressed. Without the rich and the poor we would come to deny Illusion, the illusion of the poor to become rich, this mental alienation that has been going on the entire history, that has lead to the real progress of the humankind and the illusion of the rich to defeat time, death, truth and love, another form of mental alienation that has balanced the mental alienation of the poor, turning it into a concrete mental alienation as to those of the rich which is ideative and haughty. These two forms of truth are the loads placed on the dishes of the social balance. It is never right if one of them weights more than the other.

Chapter 8

The balance between these two mental forms of alienation leads to an illusory social conformism of perfection.

The lack of poise between these two forms of mental alienation leads inevitably to anxiety. The lack of a load from the balance leads to a dead society. In communism anguish and the lack of poise were incredibly strong. In this case the society wasn't entirely dead because the counter balancing of the rich was made in a petty way. Although it wasn't out officially that the magnates of that system had luxurious properties and great sums of money, every man knew they existed, saw them with his own eyes, but accepted the lie as part of the morality, wishing that one day he could rise and why not, even manage to get a position within the system. In this system the illusion was accepted sine qua non only as hope or wish but always with a positive substrate and not as a fatality. Such sanctity was hopelessly condemned to destruction. In such a society there is no will for the freedom of action of the individual but it is spread at a doctrinally level of 'complete freedom', and this leads inevitably to a grim dictatorship. When the load of the poor is missing from the balance and it is left only that of the rich, again we have some kind of communism, dictatorship and lie as a state policy. So, my dear Irene, what you want, if you want to make it happen, it is a willingly self destruction, it means living this world with its good and bad sides, for choosing complete perfection is Hell.

All I can say to you is that **perfection is imperfection and imperfection is perfection. The paradise of the human soul's nature is imperfection, because the soul itself is imperfect.**

What you want is the annihilation of the human soul and the acceptance of a petty robot, as an individual, in a society that you crave for, where the all mighty phenomena is the stereotypy. It is impossible. Paradise does not exist in stereotypy, in perfection because all these would lead to boredom, but not any kind of periodical boredom, to boredom that could last our entire lives, in a word, to hell. Yes, my dear Irene, we need thieves and liars, and the entire scale of offenders. We need human dirt to be able to see its cleanliness.

If I were you I would see in the Mall Tower a symbol of the human ascension without thinking that there is a ceiling above it. For me that ceiling doesn't exist, so every time I shop and pass next to that tower I watch his kind smile like that of an old man sitting in the park, holding popcorn for pigeons, but also I see his worthy past as a soldier that lasted heroically on the bulwarks of history. The ceiling doesn't exist, only the sky above it and, of course, the South Star. For me, nothing else besides its grandeur and its beauty."

"I understand, Sorin, what you were trying to explain to me, but the Voice is shouting hysterically in my ears paradox, paradox, paradox! Paradox!"

"What does it mean, Irene?"

"It means that everything you have said may be paradoxical, that's what the Voice is telling me again."

"Paradoxical!?" I said, somewhat surprised.

"Yes, paradoxical", said Irene.

"It is true. Tell the Voice she is right. There is a paradox in everything, even in my dissertation. It is true, Irene, the Voice is right, paradoxically, but she is right."

Suddenly, Irene begins to show signs of anxiety.

Her breath was jerky again, in a fast rhythm. She started kicking the floor, faster and stronger, with her feet.

"What is it Irene?" I asked her.

"I'm afraid, Sorin, I'm terrible afraid, I feel I'm choking, I feel my own death closing."

"It can't happen Irene, you are well, you're healthy, you have no reason to die" I answered, trying to calm her down.

"No, Sorin, the Voice tells me I am going to die. I am so afraid as I have never been in my entire life. I'm sick, I'm desperate, help me Sorin!" cried Irene in the middle of her seizure.

Suddenly the thought of bringing her back from trance crossed my mind, but then she would be again a sick woman in the middle of a serious identity crisis. I was somewhat undecided.

"Irene!" I cried.

"I am here, Sorin, on my death bed."

"You're not on your death bed, you're in my arms. Please, ask the Voice what can I do to calm you down?"

"The Voice tells me Sorin that you should go, disappear forever from my life."

"Is that what you want, my dear Irene?"

"No, it's not, I'll miss you."

"Tell this to the Voice, Irene."

"The Voice says it heard it loud and clear, Sorin."

"Ask the Voice, what was it that upset her?"

"It said it's none of your business Sorin!" said Irene.

"You horrible Voice, this is the dirtiest blackmail", I cried. I know you have much control over Irene and you want me to lose on your chess table. You blackmail Irene with dying and you blackmail me with her seizures. You are a coward and petty Voice. You are afraid I'm going to defeat you and now you are trying by any means possible to stop the chess match of Irene's life because you are losing ground, because you feel you are going to lose even on a chess table with colorless chessmen, without rules, and yet with rules as strict as those from an Austro-Hungarian barrack."

"Shut up, Sorin. Shut up!!" cried Irene all of a sudden. "Shut up, shut up! Shut up. The Voice is saying you must shut up! It's breaking my ears. It's like the sirens of ten railway engines, all whistling at once.

Shut up, Sorin, or I will die because of the noise made by the Voice, shut up or you will never see me again!" yelled Irene, taking her hands to her ears trying to diminish the loud noise made by the Voice.

"I'm shutting up Irene. Calm down!" I cried. "Tell the Voice that I wish to continue the game, no matter what!"

"The Voice asks you one thing, Sorin", said Irene nervous.

"What is it?"

"Never, but never, tell it that it is right, never agree to what it says, don't treat it like it's your friend, treat it like it's your enemy. You are not allowed to tell the Voice that it is right, that it is true what she's saying. Never answer the Voice with paradoxes, only with concrete answers, you got it Sorin, concrete!" shouted Irene as nervous as before. I knew I should have accepted immediately the proposal of the Voice, so Irene could relax again, but I knew one thing and that in this moment of anxiety the Voice will take advantage of every mistake I make, I knew that I was like an airplane commander that is one step away from falling. I needed cold blood. I was there to save Irene, the woman I loved the most. Finally, I answered the Voice:

"I agree with the Voice Irene, but I want it to answer me in a concrete way also!"

"The Voice says it doesn't agree", said Irene nervous.

"Tell it that it's not right what it's doing. The rules or even the non-rules between two adversaries must be in the same chess table of life. Tell the Voice, Irene, that what it wants is not chess. Once my rules are stricter than its rules, the game cannot go on."

"The Voice is telling me to go on, Sorin?" said Irene.

"So the Voice accepts the fake and the dirt, the baseness and the wickedness because what she wants is a common fake. She is allowed to move with paradoxes and I am not!?"

In that moment Irene's face turned really purple. I was almost on the edge of giving in when suddenly she relaxed. Her breathing went back to normal. So did her pulse. She let her hands down and I was able to take them into my hands. I didn't know what was going on. Why this strange silence. The minutes were passing by without Irene telling me a single word. For a period of time I remained quiet because I didn't want to make her nervous. Finally I decided to tell her a few words.

"Are you feeling better, Irene?" no answer. "Is the Voice forbidding you to talk to me?" no answer. "You really don't want to answer me?", no answer. That's when I decided to tell her: **"It's paradoxical, but you used to talk a lot and you accepted to play chess."** Suddenly Irene startled and said:

"You Know Sorin, the Voice is telling me to go on with the game."

"I agree", I answered.

"She wants us to play right to the last chessman."

"I agree", I answered again.

"It also wants us to accept paradoxes."

"Of course", I said. "I have always wanted that, but what made the Voice change

her mind?"

The answer of the Voice is:

"I don't accept the false because I want to really defeat you, not through cheating."

"Oh", I said, "finally my beloved friend, the Voice, and I are able to reach a common denominator."

"Don't say that Sorin", said Irene. "The Voice is not your friend, she is your opponent."

"No, not at all, she is my friend. She does everything for my good fortune." I answered like this because I knew it was the only way to make the Voice desperate. Loving her, or why not, make friends with her? Could I ever be friend to the Voice? I would like us to be friends, Irene, to become a good friend of yours and of the Voice."

"You are my friend Sorin, but not the Voice's friend because she hates you."

"Why does she hate me Irene?"

"Because you confront her, because you don't quit."

"But first, let's finish the game."

"It's precisely because of that the Voice cannot stand you."

"I can! Tell her I simply love her."

"She hates you, Sorin."

"What can I do during the game that could make the Voice care for me?"

"To stop playing, Sorin"

"Isn't there any other alternative?"

"No, Sorin."

"Anyway I don't have any negative feelings for the Voice. For me it is just a simple layer in this game. Since it's my move, I will paradoxically move the rook to H three."

"Why?" Irene asked me.

"Because my Mall tower is free, is a tower of dreaming, of hope and why not of illusion, these components that form the base itself of the civilization concept."

"Civilization?" repeated Irene.

"Yes, civilization. Everything that leads to the concept of civilization is the dream, the hope, the illusion. Everything that took a somewhat clear shape is called today civilization. The technology, the large metropolis, the art, the culture, in a word, the morality, the fashion and everything else that is part of the civilization whether we want it or not, whether we like it or not. It's your turn, Irene, to move. I'm waiting."

"Me and the Voice will move the bishop to H two, right behind your infallible tower, Sorin."

"Why, Irene?"

"To make you move the knight at the front of the bishop."

"Why move the knight, why precisely the knight Irene?"

"Because the Voice cannot stand horses. Horses run wild on never-ending fields, a horse's life is the road, is the Path it follows forever. The Voice cannot stand this Path, this mad race that lasts from birth till death, till perfect. The Voice doesn't stand horses, Sorin", said Irene, a little nervous.

"I agree Irene that the Voice cannot stand the freedom of the dream, of the eternal race towards perfection, towards self outrunning. The Voice prefers to stay still on the edge of the road, to deny the fact that that road can also be walked. Why is she attacking precisely with the bishop, why Irene?"

"It's the will of the Voice", said Irene.

"It's the NEED of the Voice, Irene, because she accepts insanity and anxiety and the impossible, forever abstracting all kinds of figures that have no result, making all

kind of ingenious mathematical operations without any use."

"What kind of mathematics, Sorin?"

"Mathematics of thinking, Irene, where the Voice tries to personalize the abstract, to give life to death and death to life, to kill the horses because they are alive and running on the path of life, because they are a symbol of movement, of the action as it is and not in a twisted and abstract form, so it can all become a real mental alienation, an eternal pain."

"The Voice will ride the winged horses of the doubt of the so-called truth of life" said Irene.

"Yes Irene", I answered: "a part of the truth is born from doubt, but so are also born a thousand of other kinds of truth which are lies, because there can't be more than one kind of truth about the same thing. So the Voice lives in herself in an imaginary and non real space, in any way, not in our reality."

"Why don't you let her choose the reality she wants, let her have her illusion."

Didn't you say, Sorin, that we need illusion?"

"My dear Irene, I agree for the Voice to have her illusion, but what I want to prove to you, by trying to win this game for you and just for you, is that you should accept my illusion and not the illusion of the Voice."

"The Voice is also playing this game trying to win it just for me", said Irene with an obviously affected voice.

"The Voice is right again. But her being right is a truth of doubt."

I hadn't communicated with Irene for over fifteen minutes.

I was looking at her in her state of trance. She still had the same features as almost twenty years ago, only two or three barely seen wrinkles had appeared to the external corner of her eyes. Some silvery hairs were shining in the afternoon sunlight. I am close to her, trying to apply on her the technique I learned at the lamasery; the technique that can help me get rid of the Voice, and give Irene back to the society. All I know is that this Voice exists and that her name is Schizophrenia. I will try by any means to defeat the Voice with its own weapons, on the battlefield of psychic. The chess match between the Voice and I will continue, even if she will try to hide, to run, to lie and to kill. I will be patient until the right moment when I will give her the final stroke, chasing her away to the land of the four winds where she came from. What I don't know for sure is how Irene will react, the moment when she will realize she is sick, that the Voice is schizophrenia and that her life had been stolen by an illness, with so many wasted years. Will she regret the Voice, will she hate her, will she have such a powerful shock that she could have a fatal seizure or will she simply accept reality as it is, realizing that the years stolen from her can never come back.

"Where are you Irene? Can you tell me what do you see?" I asked her in a whisper, to induce her with a state of tranquility.

"The firemen barely got me off the tower. And I am in a straitjacket in an ambulance. I don't know where I'm heading. They gave me a shot, probably a sedative, cause I feel my body heavy, I feel sedated."

"Get away from those moments, Irene! You are in the hospital, in Dallas, after your aunt brought you from Australia to the United States. What are you doing there?"

"I'm in a room. The doctors here call it a re-socializing room."

"Are you alone?"

"I am not alone. Around me there are many persons that I talk to."

"Has the Voice left you?" I asked her.

"How could she leave me?! She's here with me!"

"Do you get along well with the other persons?"

"So and so."

"Can you be more precise Irene!?"

"Everyone hangs to his or her story. They don't want to listen to me."

"But do you listen to them?"

"No!"

"Why, Irene?"

"Because the Voice won't let me. She knows everything and I can't face her."

"Why, Irene?"

"Can you, a first grade pupil that hasn't even learn the alphabet, face a university teacher?!"

"Is there such a big distance between you and the Voice?"

"Yes."

"Does this mean that you let the Voice do everything she wants with you?"

"Yes."

"If a scholar would come one day to face the Voice proving to you that her truth is fake, would you deny her?"

"Why do you ask me such things?"

"Please answer, Irene!"

"I don't know how I could ever accept the idea of the Voice being untruthful, false, liar!"

"Yes, Irene, it is false, liar!"

"I don't have a false voice, Sorin! I play beautifully!"

"I don't mean your singing voice, I mean the Voice."

"Not in my deepest thought would I accept the idea that the Voice is a liar, that the Voice's truth is false."

"You see, Irene!? Maybe the others from that room have their Voices too. Every Voice claims to own basic truth and no other. Do you think there can be more than one basic truth?"

"No, Sorin! Just one, the one owned by my Voice."

"Can you prove it, Irene?"

"I will try."

"Prove to them that you are right!"

"I don't know if I'll manage, Sorin. Maybe they will accept to continue to live their lie."

"How do you know that what they say is not real and what you say is the truth, even more, the basic truth?"

"Because my Voice is right."

"What makes you think this, Irene?"

"What makes me think my Voice is right?"

"Yes, Irene."

"Something as strong as the question that keeps me alive: do I exist? Of course I exist, Sorin! As much as I think I exist that's how much I believe in the Voice. Could you say you don't exist, that you are dead?"

"No, Irene."

"You see!? It's the same with my Voice. It exists, it is true and as alive as I am. The moment the Voice would die I would be just as dead. If I would think the Voice lied to me, I would realize that my existence is a lie, that I, Irene made of flesh and blood do not exist! I am probably, some one else!"

"And what if you would realize you are a different person, Irene?"

"What would I do if I were a different person?"

"Yes, my dear Irene!"

"What would you do if you knew you were not Sorin, but someone else?"

"It's hard to say."
 "Exactly! It's the same for me."
 "Can you tell me who is with you in the re-socializing room?"
 "There are more than one person."
 "What do you do there?"
 "We talk. Sometimes we listen to music."
 "Music?" I asked her.
 "Yes, music. A doctor comes along and plays it."
 "Do you like the music you listen there?"
 "Yes, it comforts me!"
 "Who are the other persons? Have you found something in common with them?"
 "Not in talks, I haven't!"
 "But where?"
 "In clothing. We all have blue chemises and we wear our hair cut short."
 "Cut short?"
 "Yes Sorin! Women also."
 "Are there men at the Re-socializing?"
 "Yes, Sorin."
 "Who are those characters?"
 "They are: the Hunter, the Bishop, the State Chief, the Mother, Sweetie, the Countess, the Philosopher and I."
 "How do they call you there?"
 "The Lawyer" said Irene
 "And practically, what do you do there? Just talk and listen to music?"
 "No!"
 "Than?"
 "Some of us paint, and the others make envelopes."
 "Envelopes? What kind of envelopes?"
 "Envelopes for letters. Like those from the postal office."
 "Interesting!"
 "Yes, I paint and Sweetie is dancing and lifting her chemise, showing her fat legs."
 "Is Sweetie young?"
 "No. She's around sixty years old. She's very fat."
 "Why do you call her Sweetie?"
 "Because she is a prostitute and she dances striptease at a fancy restaurant."
 "Is Sweetie really a prostitute and does she really dance striptease?"
 "That's what she said."
 "What about you? What are you, Irene?"
 "I'm a lawyer."
 "Do you think Sweetie has a Voice of her own?"
 "I don't know!"
 "Why don't you ask her, Irene?"
 "I don't like Sweetie!"
 "Are you jealous on her?"
 "I cannot be jealous on a prostitute. Even if she dances striptease and she is a top model, it's her business. I am not like this and I don't want to be. Nothing that Sweetie does represents who I am."
 "What do you mean?"
 "Can't you see how she's moving her bottom? How she's showing off her legs? How she's caressing her breasts while dancing?"
 "Maybe one day you will be able to have a talk with Sweetie."

"What kind of talk can I, a lawyer, have with someone like Sweetie?"

"Does nobody talk to her?"

"There are many persons that get along with her but her best friend is the State Chief."

"The Chief of State!?" I repeated surprised.

"Yes."

"What state is he ruling?"

"The name of the country is Psychonia."

"I don't remember such a state. Perhaps you can help me Irene!"

"Psychonia is somewhere on the Psychotis continent. It is a pretty large state, with many riches."

"Is it a democracy, Irene?"

"The Chief of State told me that it was such a high democracy that he lost all his teeth trying to get the electorate to vote him."

"You mean he was kicked until all his teeth fell down?!"

"No way! He talked so much in front of the electorate that his teeth were worn out and so he lost them."

"Can one wear out his teeth by talking?"

"Of course! In Psychonia it is possible. The Chief of State revealed that information to me and he invited me to his fantastic country, but I will not accept his invitation."

"Why, Irene?"

"Because the Chief of State made Sweetie a citizen of Psychonia. This means that Psychonia has easy morals."

"In a democracy, it is the population that decides."

"The Chief of State wants to give me visa for Psychonia. You cannot enter his country unless you have a visa, because there are many illegal immigrants that change the workforce market in Psychonia, stealing the jobs from the legal inhabitants. There are very strict rules because Psychonia has a high standard of living. Right now I'm looking at the Chief of State who is smiling proudly with his toothless mouth and with a black eye, lifting willingly his belly and keeping his hands to the back. I waved to him to come to me. Sweetie is dancing next to the Bishop. The Chief of State is jealous and he comes towards me, walking gravely. He says: "You have my respect lady Lawyer". He bows respectful to me."

"Ask him, Irene, how does democracy work in Psychonia?"

"He tells me that it works clockwise."

"I don't understand, Irene. Ask him if there are parties that fight among them for elections?"

"I asked him and he said that in Psychonia there are no parties, only clocks whose hands work only one way, showing the exact time every time he, as Chief State, wishes to know. His job is, he said, just to know what time is it. The better he reads the hour, the better his country rises to the peaks of progress and civilization of the humankind. The government in Psychonia is made of watchmakers that fix the clocks that are to be read by the president."

"But the population, Irene? What is the population of Psychonia, and what does it do?" I interfered.

"The population of Psychonia, Sorin, is made of ingredients like stabilizers, flavors, sweeteners, dyes. All this population of ingredients help preparing the food for the national feast."

"The National Feast?"

"Yes, Sorin! For the National Feast where the Chief of State and his Watchmakers

eat. A part of the funds subvention diplomacy and some wars."

"Diplomacy?"

"And some diplomacy it is, Sorin! Psychonia is an active member of the international community, a successful member not only of some global international structures but also of some regional international structures, whose members are only solid democracies like Psychonia, democracies whose population is taught to read the exact hour and they even have the right to hear it from the State Chief's mouth."

"Why must they find out the time from the Chief of State and not through their own eyes? Why aren't these ingredients or populations taught how to read the time?"

"The Chief of State told me, Sorin, that the ingredients cannot possess watches because of the immaculate democracy itself that rules them. The ingredients can only know philosophical and theoretically the essence of the democracy, but its vigor will be consumed always by the Chief of State and by the Watchmakers that sustain his clock. As I said, in Psychonia democracy works clockwise."

"I think I didn't understand", I whispered to Irene. "Although, Irene, ask him what will Sweetie do in such a country with such a highly developed democracy?"

"The Chief of State told me, with a dignified voice that he is bewitched by Sweetie's charms and that such a top model could not have any other husband except the State Chief, who could make her happy for the rest of her life, surrounded by gifts, love, and beyond all that she would have the supreme honor that only Watchmakers have: to read the exact time with her own eyes and to dance as much as she wants around the clock that will replace her striptease bar."

"I wish you could ask him, Irene ..."

"I can't ask him anything because he is running, insanely jealous like Othello, towards the Bishop! He can't stand that Sweetie is dancing and showing her feminine charms to the Bishop who's already started to feel her. The Chief of State is screaming: "Sweetie! I beg you, don't kill me! I will give you anything you want. You will become the first lady of Psychonia! I beg you, don't let this stupid imbecile touch you! Don't let him see your charms similar to those of an Olympian goddess!" The Chief of State feels really hurt, Sorin", said Irene. "Now the Bishop is interfering, he who is now holding Sweetie into his arms, while she rolls up lascivious in his lap."

"Damn you, Chief of State for talking like this to a holy person, someone that belongs to faith!"

The Chief of State interferes, Sorin:

"What faith do you belong to, Bishop, since you are holding Sweetie in your arms?"

Sweetie mews and says to the State Chief:

"Let me be loved! Don't steal from my love! Let me eat a lot, a lot of love cause I'm hungry!"

I don't know Sorin how come the Bishop is not choking since he is a tiny thin man and Sweetie is so terribly fat! I can see the Bishop is holding on and he answers breathing hard:

"What is my faith, you bastard that steals watches from all the colleagues? My faith is Faith! I believe in Faith and that's all! What is my Faith made of? Different shapes and that's all. What are these shapes? I don't know! Shapes, just shapes! My Faith is made of shapes, and is as shaped as the shapes that shape it and those are the shapes of faith. The shapes of faith, but many shapes, shapes, shapes!!!"

Now the Chief of State is interfering again."

"What is he saying, Irene?"

"The Chief of State is asking the Bishop if he can make watch shapes with his shapes. He is suggesting that he could fill his shapes with watches. The Bishop

answers: "With watches, you rascal? With watches that you and your watchmakers from Psychonia can wind? You want the shapes of my faith to work when you fix the watch in the time that you want? I, the Bishop of faith, I believe in Faith and that's all!"

Now Sweetie is interfering Sorin, asking the Bishop if he believes in her also, and the Bishop startles, pushing Sweetie away from his lap, crying: 'You've got full shapes, Sweetie! You've got full shapes! The shapes I believe in are the shapes of faith, there are empty! Empty shapes!"

Sweetie takes off her chemise and says to the Bishop: "Now, you holy one, my shapes are empty! They're empty!" and she's turning around dancing in front of the Bishop. Seeing this, the Chief of State falls on his knees, begging Sweetie to put her clothes back on because his jealousy is terrible. The more he begs, the more he gets excited.

The Bishop, too, falls on his knees, crying: "Now I believe in empty shapes! I believe in empty shapes! My faith is getting stronger!" The Bishop is holding his penis, crying: "How strong my faith is!!!"

Now three men dressed in white enter the room. They go straight to Sweetie and they put her chemise back on, although the Chief of State is shouting loud: "Murderers!!! I will condemn you to death for touching my Sweetie, who is the first lady in Psychonia, chosen democratically by a people that even knows how to read the exact time!"

Kneeling down, the Bishop is also shouting: "You bastards! How can you mock faith, her empty shapes? You have committed a sacrilege that will torment you your entire lives!"

After they got Sweetie dressed, the three take the Chief of State from his knees and put him at the table. They do the same with the Bishop. Sweetie is dancing. Now, the Philosopher interferes, a tall and fat man, who says: "The Administration and the Religion are sitting quietly at the table. What's left? The subtle dancer and from her, the dance, the dance and nothing more! She is still dancing, losing the faith that clothed her. Could it be that she has lost her faith, Bishop?"

The Bishop looks at Sweetie, saying: "Yes, she has lost her hope because her shapes are not empty anymore! Faith is pure, naked, honest and truthful. The shapes of faith, Philosopher, cannot be filled by anything, not even watches, because then they no longer belong to faith!"

When the Bishop said the word *watches*, the Chief of State started shouting into the Bishop's year: "Tick-tack! Tick-tack! Tick-tack!" The latter faces him, crying also: "The shapes of faith are empty because they are filled with faith and faith is empty, pure it never wears clothes or gloves." The Philosopher also shouts: "Gloves are the supreme symbol of philosophy. They keep the hands away from the winter cold, and our souls are also gloves that cannot bear to feel the freezing metal with a naked palm. From this metal are the State Chief's watches made of."

The Chief of State keeps shouting: "Tick-tack! Tick-tack! Tick-tack!"

Seeing that passions run high, the Mother decides to interfere propitiatory. Mother, a medium sized colleague, around fifty, with a thin skinny face. I don't know why I always have the impression that this woman resembles a mare, with its prominent mouth. Mother tells them: "Come on kids, cut it out!"

These argues are of no use to you. Neither were for John. Sleep tight, John!"

Mother is always holding a blanket in which she sees John. I don't see John in Mother's blanket. I can't see anything in that blanket. Only Mother can see John, her baby she's been breast feeding since her young age, as she said.

"Shut up, you wrecked woman!" answers the Bishop. "You have to obey your husband, the father of your child. Where is your man, you adulterine?"

"I am not an adulterine, father. My husband is at work and he must be here any minute. I don't even know if I'll have enough time to breast-feed my child before he arrives. Sexually speaking, I am an honest person, father."

The Bishop says to her: "Honest? Sexually? Who's interested in sex?"

The Philosopher interferes, asking: "Sex, Bishop?! But didn't you see Sweetie's charms? Didn't you like her nakedness?"

The Bishop answers irritated to the Philosopher: "Me? At her charms? No way! I looked at the faith's bars, at its power, at how real it is! Yes, Philosopher at how real the gospel truth is! That's why was naked. Was a faith's truth, Philosopher, which you cannot think at all with your philosophy?"

The Philosopher interferes: "The gospel truth of your faith is sex, Bishop! Because when you saw the gospel truth, when you saw it naked, your hand was on your sex. Your gospel truth is a chimera!"

The Chief of State keeps yelling: "Tick-tack! Tick-tack!"

The Mother nurses her child.

The Hunter straightens threatening to the Bishop, yelling: "I got you, animal! I got you! I knew that if I lie in wait for you I will finally catch you. I shall fight with you till my last breath!"

The Bishop shouts again as much as he can: "Why? Why? Why are you hunting me?"

"How can I hunt you not, wild animal, when your truth is a chimera? I hunt chimeras, especially chimeras!"

"Why don't you hunt hyenas? Hyenas, hyenas like the Philosopher?"

"Because I am the chimeras hunter, chimeras, chimeras!!!"

The Bishop called for help. Two white-dressed men make for the hunter.

"I am going to fight with you!" The hunter yelled. "I am going to kill you too because you are Chimeras! Chimeras! Chimeras! You too." The two white-dressed men try with difficulty to immobilize the Hunter because he is a strong man, with an athletic body, tall and stout. A third man comes too and puts on the Hunter a white shirt with long sleeves. I realize now that this is a straight jacket because they tie his hands at the back. The Hunter writhe spasmodically, throwing himself on the floor. The Bishop is happy and dances with, petting her prince on and on in the Fate Tower, as she says.

"Irene, did you see that the Princess has a tower of her own too?"

"Yes, Sorin, but her tower is totally different from my covered tower from Mall. I wait for nobody in my covered tower. I don't live in it, as the Princess does, who doesn't admire the tower itself, as I do, but the tower keeps her captive waiting for the prince. I wanted to get away from the tower from Mall. Sorin, my tower is more different than the princess? The Princess doesn't love her tower, she hates it, she loathes it, she feels its walls cold, as she told me. For her, the tower where she finds is totally strange to her soul, it's totally impersonal. My tower is really something else. The Princess is the only one who wants to do something, besides me. She makes a hobby from making envelopes. I asked her one day why she needs so many envelopes? She told me she wanted to send letters to her prince, who fights against their kingdom's enemies. I asked her to tell me something about the kingdom they lived in. She told me that there was a powerful king in that kingdom, king Delirium, whom all the subjects were afraid of, together with his beloved wife, queen Deliria. They both lived a lonely and wise life in one of their palaces, meaning that they made no excesses concerning food, drink or parties. The common sense and their love for the kingdom, named Deliria, was all they were characterized by.

"Their son, the prince, became my husband in a very strange way. I knew that I was a girl of the people, without having blue blood in my veins. I have never thought

that such a noble man could be my lover and my husband one day. But the chance makes miracles and, one day, being at an artesian well in the fortress, kind of Fontana di Trevi of our days, full of tourists, what do you think I did?" the Princess asked me. "I ascended a banister which separated the water-basin from the proper tourists. I jumped into the water and started to shout: "Come and drink from the Water of Life! It makes miracles! I took off my clothes, I stayed naked and I started to drink water, a lot of water, more and more water that I was to drawn myself with the Water of Life. There was too much life in the fountain. I want to recommend to everyone not to drink too much from the Water of Life no matter how thirsty of life they might be, because they can drawn and die."

I asked the Princess why she had taken off her clothes in the fountain. She answered that in this way she was closer to the Water of Life. The clothes barrier was removed. Eventually, the Princess kept on telling, being almost dead, because she had drawn with the Water of Life, the Prince of Deliria came to save her.

He took her in his arms and brought her to the shore and the Princess opened her eyes while the Prince of Deliria gave her the fist aid. She has always told me how much she liked that moment. The Princess considers it to be the most beautiful in her life. The Prince of Deliria took her to the hospital, fell in love with the Princess and married her, having a fairy-tale like wedding, where the guests were from all over the kingdom or the world.

"I've listened to you very gladly, my dear Irene, but I would like you to find something about Deliria's history from the Princess. First, I would like to know where she knows from this wonderful name of the kingdom she lives in?"

"All right, Sorin, I'll leave aside my painting for a while and I'll go to talk to the Princess."

"What are you painting now, Irene?"

"I'm painting a sun which is bigger than the painting's frame, a sun that outruns this room."

"How can you do this on a few centimeters easel, Irene?"

"Very easy, Sorin, what I paint on the easel is only that tiny bit of the sun, which represents its soul and its center."

"Can you tell me how the sun's soul looks like?"

"It's clean. It's white. All my painting is of an immaculate white, so no drop of paint was needed anymore. To make such a paint I had only to caress the paper with a dry brush, without any paint. This is how I managed to paint the pure soul of the sun."

"How much time did you need to finish such a masterpiece, Irene?"

"There are some good days since I've been working at!"

"Remarkably, dear!"

"Here I am near the Princess!"

"Ask her, please, which is Deliria's history. Where did she first hear this name. Tell her that Deliria is a very respected and loved kingdom all over the world and, please, tell her that I have a lot of respect for the wise rulers of Deliria."

"I've told her all these, Sorin. The Princess tells me: "After being saved by the prince, those from the ambulance came to take me to the hospital. Some guy told my prince that he was Delirious, while I kept his hand in mine, kissing it from time to time. From that moment on, I felt that I was completely in love with the Prince and that I needed neither his parents' noble ranks nor his money. All I wanted in that moment was the endless love that he had for me and that I needed so much. The moment that person told my prince he was Delirious I knew that he belongs to the great noble family Delirium, a family of which King Delirium and Queen Deliria belongs too, from the Deliria Kingdom."

"Ask her please, what is the way in which she has been separated from the Prince."

"The Princess tells me that she got here, in the Fate Tower, together with the Prince, and after their fairy – tale like wedding, the Prince left for the war."

"Where did they make their wedding, Irene?"

"The Princess looks at me happy, telling me there were the Fate Tower's balls, where even the white – dressed angels had come to admire her keeping on saying: "Delirium! Deliria! Deliria!" Sorin, the Princess tells me that these were the most beautiful moments on her life, moments when the Philosopher, the Chief State, the Bishop and the Mother had been present too, and her baby had danced as only the most divine fairies can dance."

"How did the wedding look like to the State Chief?"

"I would ask him, Sorin, but he is still ticking: Tick – Tack!

Tick – Tack!"

"Then ask somebody else, the Philosopher, for example."

"The Philosopher tells me that he is in deep meditation right now."

"What meditates him upon, Irene?"

"He tells me that he is restless because of the profound relation between sex and church, orgasm and prayer, the positions of making love and religion."

"What is the result that the Philosopher came to?"

"He tells me that we were let live by God only after our parents' strong sex party, who, in their torn, exist because of another sex party, that of our grandparents, grandgrand parents and so on. We were let by God, the Philosopher says, only to regulate, along the history, in order to procreate ourselves. Religion tells that we exist only by God's will. Wheel then, if such an existence is His will, we should we be ashamed of a normal biological fact and why should religion blame so terribly God Himself?"

"It doesn't blame Him!" the Bishop shouted.

"It blames Him, scoundrel! The Chief State shouts.

"Come on, my lovers, don't you dance with Sweetie?" Sweetie said.

"In the antiquity", the Philosopher went on, "Where were real temples of love, where the love and the proper regulate became religion. Haven't we removed from ourselves, haven't we become estranged from ourselves too, by driving the sex in our lives away, naming it obscene and giving birth to some shameful bashfulness that... Does God really like us to be ashamed of the body He created? What's the most real fact in man's life than that of giving birth of another life? Does the religion want to stop the procreation and the death of the humanity, indeed? As long as Religion won't adopt the sex as something usual, as food is, as long as the talks about this in the church will be totally attributed to the evil, we should not be surprised that even Religion Itself becomes estranged from us.

"Shut up, you son of a bitch! The Bishop interferes." "Your philosophy sucks, it's like zero cut in a thousand. How can Religion become estranged from us? It is close to us! CLOSE!" The Bishop shouted.

"Don't you have at Sweetie any more, you bastard! The Chief State interfered as loud as then, keeping on ticking."

The Bishop raises from the table, heads to Sweetie who, being tired of too much dancing, lies on the floor and tells her:

"How can that stupid Philosopher make such a connection? Oh God. I am even scared to admit, to repeat, meaning between religion and sex."

"But what is the connection, Lover?" Sweetie asked the Bishop.

"There is no "Lover"!

The Chief State interfered.

"I, as the Chief State of the Psychonia, I will promulgate a rule that the Bishop not

to be allowed to talk to the future first lady, Sweetie."

"But tell me, Chief State, will you oppress the church forbidding it to talk to Sweetie? It's a sacrilege.

I will complain to the international community that the most elementary human rights, like religion, as not respected in Psychonia" the Bishop says.

"OK, Bishop! I will respect them, but I want you to finish faster talk with Sweetie.

And without her calling you "Lover", but Bishop!"

"Without "Lover"?" Sweetie says deeply irritated.

"Without!" the Chief of State yells.

"Well then, as a first lady, I will address to the watchmaker ministers" of Psychonia to change the democracy's working. I'll let democracy work in the clock wise, but at another hour. All these because you State Chief, don't respect the freedom of speech, which belongs to the fundamental human rights and liberties too."

The Chief of State raises from the table and heads to Sweetie. This one removed, some kind disgusted by the man who has just sat next to her. The Bishop follows her. "Don't move away from me, Sweetie, the first lady of Psychonia. I swear I'll love you forever, but don't order the watchmaker ministers to change my exact hour. Now you can even use this horrid name, Lover, but it would be better if you would have addressed it to me too."

"To, you? No way!" Sweetie answered the State Chief.

"Maybe to me, because I'm the one with the culture!" the Bishop said.

"To you it's Ok." Sweetie answered m and then went on: Lover, Lover! Lover! Shouting as loud as she could it the Bishop's ear. The Bishop spring up from the floor and says:

"God, help me! I was about to die, that strong was the "Lover"!"

"I wanted to be strong! To feel it!" Sweetie says.

The Chief of State begins to tick again. It's just now that the Bishop begins his pleading:

"As you now, dear faithful..." The Bishop adopts a serious image, "so, as you know very well, dear faithful, God's slave, Sweetie, asked me how can we compare Religion to what a man does in bed with his wife. It cannot be compared!" The Bishop shouts. "In bed is something, at the church is something else."

"Bishop, you have to admit", the Philosopher shouts "that our every day mental mood depends on sex, because sex is a need, that's why we look for God depending on our mental mood too. You cannot admit that God must be considered to be a strange fact to the sexual act.

After all, do you want to say that God, who knows all, has no idea of what happens under the counterpane, so that this act must be excluded? How would the humanity look like if the sexual act would have totally disappeared? What if we would be together only in the mating period, like the animals?

Let me tell you, Bishop: this would be a humanity that would lose God forever.

Because love wouldn't exist anymore or even if it would, it would not be like the today's one. A lot of feelings of our consciousness would diminish so that we should become animal like. What I tell you paradoxical but we need sex as well as religion.

The next generations will understand this thing better than us. God himself wouldn't exists in people's minds if sex wouldn't exist; I've explained to you, Bishop, that of the most important feelings of the human consciousness would be annihilated, love, kindness, purity will vanish and we will be determined not to look for God anymore.

That's why, Bishop, there is a strong connection between God and sex. The false bashfulness of the centuries and the morality which wasn't ours led to the most of the bad things which destroyed our humanity. Wars, love crimes, jealousies, lie, alienation,

dictatorship, constitutional laws, which reflected in no way the real people who voted them, but the false and lying bashfulness morality, this psychosis which sickened not only the populations but Religion itself. All these happened because of the criminal bashfulness and the false morality of establishing the real connection between Sex and God."

"Blasphemy! Blasphemy, Philosopher!" the Bishop shouts more restless than ever, making the cross sign with his hand, in the air.

"Is it you that talk about blasphemy?" the Chief of State says.

"What if it isn't blasphemy, Lover? Or maybe we need more and more sex to know God better, Lover?" Sweetie says to the Bishop.

"What's sex?" The Princess interferes. "It doesn't exist, but the endless love does. We only find God in the endless love."

"You should see for your envelopes for the Prince!" the Philosopher says.

"I've found God through sex", mother said, "I have this wonderful child that I always nurse through sex, crazy sex, everyday sex. Having this child I've found God."

"Shut up, whore!", the Bishop cuts her any possibility of going on in the discussion.

"It depends on the kind of sex", he blasts first but then his voice becomes soft and he talks almost whispering, but forceful: "so, dear faithful, as I've already told you, God has created sex too, but it depends on the way we do it.

With who, sleeping with your husband and sleeping with a strange person isn't the same thing? It's one thing to commit adultery and another to be in absolute legality."

"Legality, the philosopher says? Isn't legality a result of the buying morality or of the false bashfulness indeed? Is the human being made to stay all life long with only one partner? I doubt!

After two or three years the boredom comes and then, the husband and wife live together only for interest, because they have some common things, or out of friendship, out of habit or because they are afraid of loneliness, thinking they will never meet another stable partner.

I want to know if there is any person who didn't even think of having sex with another person. I don't like to hear the Bishop saying he doesn't like women. "He's nuts about Sweetie's beauties. Is Sweetie his wife indeed?"

"She's mine!" the Chief of State says. "She's the first Lady!"

"I am Lover's", Sweetie said to the Bishop. This one is simply stuck in his own statements and gives no answer.

"I'm not a whore!" mother said. "I did all I had to do to have the child I wanted so much. I needed man seed, as much, as big and as strong, oh strong, as possible! What an orgasm!" mother shouts.

"Stop it, whore, or God will punish you!" the Bishop said.

"I leave you for good! I send you away from my soul!" Sweetie says. "I don't want to ever see you because you didn't recognize that I'm yours. Go away, poor priest, who doesn't know God!"

The Bishop is restless and depressed than ever. He's streaking from all the articulations, stronger and stronger. At one time, he shouts:

"I love you, Sweetie! I love you!"

"You don't love her, became you left!" the Chief of State says. "She's my wife, the first lady of Psychonia and a scabby man like you isn't allowed to love her. You walk through paths that are against God", the Chief of State of Psychonia went on calmly and thoughtfully.

"Love is allowed" the Bishop said.

"It must be allowed" the Princess pathetically interferes.

"As much, much, much, love!" mother said. "Don't call me whore you ground squirrel, or I'll get up and come to you! Wait till I finish nursing my baby and then, I'll personally deal with you, dastardly priest, who abuses respectable woman, with a child, who has her house and moreover, a husband too."

"So, you are allowed to love me, Bishop! Do you want to stay with me in bed forever? Come on, tell me, Bishop! Sweetie says.

"Sweetie, please don't call me BISHOP!"

"How do you want me to call you?"

"Lover!"

"Answer the question first!"

"Answer", the Chief of State says; he doesn't tick from some time ago, suddenly becoming moderate, even tactful.

"All right, I'll say, dear faithful, that she is...". The Bishop shuts up. He is shaking of all his entrails, going on then: "so, my loved Sweetie, are you the State Chief's wife?"

"Yes", this one said, before Sweetie.

"Yes! Sweetie said too, with a crocodile – like smile, who lies in wait for the prey under the water, hidden somewhere among the herbs, and looking forward to seize it."

"If you are the State Chief's wife of Psy-cho-ni-a!" emphasizing each syllable of the word on purpose.

"It is then in my faith's spirit, of the gospel truth, of the naked form."

"Look how naked!" Sweetie says and she raises her chemise tip to her shoulders, leaving her old and fat skins drop in front of the Bishop.

"I'm looking" this one says.

"So you are looking to somebody else's wife's nudity!" Sweetie went on.

"I'm looking to you, my beloved Sweetie!"

"Bishop, I want you to tell me if there is any connection between God and sex."

"There is."

"So, there isn't blasphemy anymore!" the Philosopher interfered.

"We cannot live but with our wife." The Chief of State said.

"That's true." The in-love Princess of Deliria stressed.

"Noo! Noo! It's not true!" The Bishop shouted. "It isn't adultery. We can live with more persons and with Sweetie too. I am the Bishop of the gospel truth, naked as you, Sweetie!"

"You cannot accept somebody like this, toy horny priest that you are! The Chief of State said irritated. "It means that you run after a chimera, then, you are the chimera's Bishop!"

"No! No! No! Chimera!" the Hunter shouts, still caught in the straitjacket. "I don't hunt hyenas but chimeras! I'm a Chimeras Hunter and must kill them!" The Hunter stirs on the floor, coming up his head against it, and keeping on shouting: "I do not hunt hyenas but chimeras, gentlemen! I've heard that there is a chimera in this room! Yes, ladies and gentlemen, it is a real chimera that I must defeat! I've been running after chimeras all my life long and I haven't got any yet, although I laid waiting to them day and night in the darkened forests of my thoughts, although I bear the rains and the blizzard, the frost and the heat of my soul, I didn't manage to catch any chimera till now. I can feel that here, in this room, there is a chimera, flesh and bones! Flesh and bones!" the Hunter repeats. "Please, my dears, my lovers, untie me, so that I can catch my chimera!"

"How does the flesh and bones chimera look like?" the Philosopher asks.

"In the flesh and bones of Chimera!" the Hunter answers.

"How are they?"

"I cannot tell you, Philosopher, because they are given by the thought."
 "Meaning, Hunter, that the flesh and bones of the Chimera are on our thoughts?"
 "That's right, Philosopher! Come and untie me so I can catch the Chimera!"
 The Chief of State began to tick again. The Bishop keeps kissing Sweetie. Mother nurses her child. The princess makes envelopes, and I sit at the table, listening to everyone's pleadings so that I can frame them.
 "But there is a difference between the flesh and we see and feel and the one we think of" the Philosopher says.
 "It's not true! The flesh we think about is the same thing with the one we feel, it does exist, as well as Chimeras flesh and bones, the one that I run after for so much time. Have a heart Philosopher, and untie me so that I can catch my chimera!"
 "But what is chimera like, Hunter? Is it an animal, a bird, a fish?"
 "It is an animal, bird, fish together with all the things a man would want."
 "Is it love, too, Hunter?"
 "Mostly love, Philosopher."
 "What countries does the chimera live, Hunter?"
 "In very many countries, Philosopher!"
 "Chimera lives in Psychonia too", the Chief of State said thoughtful.
 "Chimera lives not only in Psychonia but in Deliria too, in many beautiful countries, with the Fate Tower, where I wait for the Princess of the famous sovereigns D & D."
 "Princess, can you invite me in your country, to hunt chimera?" the Hunter says.
 "I praise you to come, Hunter! We want you to get rid of the Chimeras because they sometimes attack both the people and their riches."
 "You are welcomed in Psychonia too, Hunter! Me, the State Chief, invite you at a chimera hunting!"
 "How can I not come? I thank your Highnesses, but now, I would like you to untie me, so that I can catch this chimera who is in the palace hall, too."
 "Sorin? Do you hear me?"
 "Yes, Irene!"
 "Is the Re-socialization Hall a palace hall? I am in a palace, Sorin?"
 "What is your voice telling you, Irene?"
 "It keeps silent. It lets me listen to your pieces of advice."
 "You aren't in a palace, Irene. You are in a psychiatry hospital."
 "It's just now that the voice interferes telling me that I'm not in a hospital but in a place, together with the Chimeras Hunter. Have you ever hunted chimeras, Sorin?"
 "Every man hunts a chimera, for at least one time in his life."
 "Where did you hunt chimera? In the jungle?"
 "No, Irene. Chimera isn't an animal, but a simple thought, a wish that you run after in vain, because it can never be materialized."
 "It's not true, Sorin! You're a great liar! The voice tells me that the chimeras do exist in flesh and bones as well as in the troughs, in the same way as each animal. The voice tells me that the chimeras are the most wanted trophies that any hunter would want. They aren't something that cannot be materialized, they aren't only unfulfilled wishes, Sorin. In the first place, the chimeras are the fulfilled wishes for me and the Voice. I belong to a famous trophy that I will one day put on the wall. So, Sorin, what you say is that these mates of mine, from this palace hall, don't have right? Do you want to say that these wonderful dissertations are some rough frauds?"
 "The majority is, Irene."
 "It's not true, Sorin! Not True! I want you to get away from my life, my consciousness, from everything that surrounds me and represents me! Please, Sorin,

go!"

"I won't go, but I'll stay thrusting in your consciousness, like a dagger in a blood-stained heart. Tell all these to your dastardly Voice that tells you to throw me away because it is scared of it sharing a part of your soul with me. I'll answer with selfishness to the voice's selfishness, with wickedness and disdainfully to her contempt. Tell her not to put me on trial unless she feels the result of a war against me!"

"My voice tells me she has quieted, Sorin!"

"Then, Irene, I need you to help me!"

"I'm listening, Sorin!"

"Ask the Chief of State how the Princess's wedding seemed to him."

"I'm heading towards the Chief of State who this time is calm, I'm asking him about the Princess' wedding and he's answering me: "It has been an extraordinary wedding where all the people from Deliria came! The diplomatic officials of Psychonia participated to the festivities and me personally. So nicely and suavely the Sweetie danced for the whole people that a few white angels came down to her, put her in an angelical strait jacket and took her to Heavens with them to delight God too with her magnificent good-fairylike dance. The Sweetie also danced on the music of the national anthem of Psychonia, which sounds like that: Tra la, tra la, la la la, tick, tack, tick, tack, tick, tack, la."

"Sing this splendid anthem of my country for me and I will dance on its lines and its lyrics!" says the Sweetie pushing aside the Bishop who was feeling her and heading towards us.

"I'll sing this anthem for you, Sweetie, just to see you dance one more time in my life!"

Sweetie was naked for a long time now, since she had wanted to show the Bishop her talents as a strip dancer. I think Sweetie weighs almost one hundred and thirty kilos. I don't know how she is able to move her head, Sorin!? She managed to stand up on her own by rolling from the position where she was lying on her back in the position where she was lying on her belly, then, with an ingenious move, she bent her legs in the kneel position and by pushing the palms of her hands against the floor she rose from this position the sole of one foot, stepping on the floor. Then the other foot and, look now, the delicate Sweetie is coming towards us! Although I don't agree with this prostitute, the protocol states that, when you are in the presence of a Chief of State you ought to behave in a certain way, properly for this type of occasions. Do you find this Sweetie bitch more beautiful than me, Sorin?

"No, my dear, of course not!"

"Then why does everybody praise her so much? Sweetie over here, Sweetie over there, Sweetie top model, Sweetie ..."

"Irene, don't you worry because of Sweetie! The others find Sweetie so beautiful because they too have some Voices which convey Sweetie's image in the superlative."

"The Bishop is also coming towards us. He's jealous on the Chief of State! I want to ask him if he also has a Voice just like I do. He is answering me: "Poor child! How can you imagine that I don't have a Voice inside my soul? How can you imagine that I don't hear the Voices that are guiding me on the right way? I can hear even more Voices, which sometimes argue, fighting for supremacy in the Universe. All these Voices, my poor child, are nothing compared to a thunder-like Voice, so powerful that would move even the mountains, so warm that you would get burned if you stayed still in front of it. That is God's Voice! Yes, my dear lawyer child, I'm the only human being that can hear, in his mind, God's Voice. I have to hide every time I know that it is coming towards me because its powerful thunder could kill me and its heat could burn me."

"You are a special man, Bishop, if you can hear God's Voice, but when you were touching Sweetie don't you hear God's Voice telling you that an important prelate like you should commit such indecent deeds?"

"No, Lawyer! I didn't hear God's Voice!" says Sweetie clearly irritated by my remark, so that I can't but ask her:

"The Bishop told me that he is the only one who can hear God's Voice!"

"He's right! He is the only one!" says Sweetie.

"Then why do you say you didn't hear it either?"

"It's simple, you smart Lawyer! If it's so powerful that it would move mountains, if it's like a thunder, I should have heard it too from the Bishop's head, because I was next to him. Besides that, it wasn't God's Voice because the Bishop didn't even keep me warm, otherwise I would have felt some of its heat, if not a real glow at least a small heat!"

"I really can't stand this Sweetie bitch, Sorin!"

"What exactly makes you avoid her, Irene?"

"First of all, my Voice is telling me that she vies with me, that she puts me entirely in the shadow."

"Are you envious of Sweetie, Irene?"

"I have to admit that I am."

"Would you like to get into favor with the Bishop or with the Chief of State?"

"No, that no! I don't like them either!"

"Why not, Irene?"

"Because they are not my type!"

"What type of man would you like, Irene?"

"A type that I can't define."

"But do you feel that this type you can't define exists or is it just a purposeless wish?"

"I think it exists. I wish it were you, Sorin! But the Voice is telling me to stay away from you and not to trust you for a moment. It's always telling me that you are a good-for-nothing man."

"If I'm such a good-for-nothing man then why does the Voice refuse to continue our chess game to the end? Why doesn't it make a move? Is the Voice afraid of me?"

"Maybe it is, maybe it is not, Sorin. The Princess has stopped making envelopes and has joined the Chief of State and now she says to him: I thank you from the bottom of my heart, Mr. Chief of State, for accepting the invitation to the royal family wedding in Deliria! Did you enjoy yourself?"

"Yes, Princess, I had a wonderful time in the company of the first lady, Sweetie!"

After finishing this sentence The Chief of State continues to tick but not tack, I mean, he is only saying: "Tick! Tick! Tick!" Sweetie corrects him by shouting: "Tack! Tack! Tack!" so that the Chief of State's ticking is barely heard. "Is your Voice only ticking!?" Sweetie asks him.

"No!" he answers.

"Why not?" Sweetie asked him, puzzled.

"Because my Voice is tacking: Tack! Tack! Tack! but it isn't ticking: Tick! Tick! Tick!"

"Then, why are you ticking: Tick! Tick! Tick?"

"To counterbalance my tacking voice: Tack! Tack! Tack!"

"How?"

"Simple! The Voice is tacking, I'm ticking with my voice and in my ears I can hear my clock functioning normally: Tick-tack! Tick-tack! Tick-tack! and so on!"

"Chief of State, what a true and wonderful man you are!" Sweetie says, sitting

down on the table, close to him, in such a position that he stops ticking, adopts a solemn posture, looks at her somehow eagle-like and asks her:

"Why do you, my beloved Sweetie, consider me a true and wonderful man?"

"He is neither true nor wonderful!" the jealous Bishop interferes. "He is a sinful man, a scoundrel politician! All politicians are scoundrels!" he says while making the sign of the cross in the air over and over again, deeply moved by Sweetie's behavior.

"You are true and wonderful because" Sweetie keeps quite for a while, almost looking down on us. "Because you always know what time it is and secondly, because you remind us all the precise hour with your ticking!"

"Is this what your Voice is saying?" the Philosopher asks her.

"Your Voice! Your Voice! My Chimera!" cries the Hunter. "My Voice is the most gentle and whispered Voice in the world. My Voice tells me its holy words whispering!"

"Whispering!?" The Bishop wondered.

"Whispering! But still, I hear it stronger than the thunder of your Voice, Bishop!"

"A simple whisper stronger than the thunder!?"

"Exactly, Bishop!"

"Stronger than the roaring of a huge waterfall?"

"Exactly, Bishop!"

"But is not hotter than my Voice!"

"It's hotter than girded live coals! It is continually burning me, consuming my soul! I can hear it and I feel it sizzling on the live coals of the Voice."

"Hunter, it must be so painful!" the Bishop smiles happily on hearing the news that the Hunter is suffering.

"It is very painful, Bishop!"

"Nothing can be more painful than when a phenomenal theory is born and doesn't find its place in this world" says the Philosopher with his head propped up against his hands. "The pain is the death of the theory!" he yelled this time, "And the Voice is the grave digger of the theory!"

"I don't understand!" the Hunter interfered. "My Voice burns me and whispers to me by thundering: Catch the Chimera! Catch the Chimera! and your Voice buries the theory. I don't understand, please, Philosopher, be more explicit!"

"By all means, my dear Hunter!" said the Philosopher with joy in his voice. "My Voice too brings me a lot of pain as it is always burying my theory. From the moment I give birth to my theory and I see it coming to life, my Voice comes stealthily, like an enemy who steals the fruit of my life and buries it in the ground of oblivion and doubt thus hurting me deeply in the depths of my Philosophy."

"Fantastic!" exclaims the Hunter.

"Is your Voice your enemy, Philosopher?" I ask him.

"Yes, Mrs. Lawyer! My Voice is my deadly enemy. I hate it with all my heart, with all my being! Every time I try to chase it away, it returns, more and more frightening and steals even the few thoughts, the few ideas of my fabulous, brilliant theory of the universe origin."

"Philosopher, why is your Voice doing this to you?"

"Why is it doing this to me?! Because it doesn't want me to understand the origin of the universe."

"Do you think your Voice is hiding something from you?" the Hunter also interfered.

"Of course it is! It steals and hides everything from me but especially the reason for which it won't let me get to the origin of the universe and develop my own theory about the genesis of the universe." says The Philosopher.

"My Voice is my friend!" I say to the Philosopher.

"My Voice is a good and loving comrade, but it is cruel and merciless when I'm not looking for the Chimera." says the Hunter.

"My Voice loves me more than anyone else in the world!" said Sweetie. "It is my good friend and adviser. She always tells me: You're the most beautiful and desirable woman in the world! Not even the sun could reach your supreme beauty!" Sweetie continues, looking down on us while sitting beside the Chief of State who adopted a solemn, stiff, motionless, speechless posture.

"My Voice is a necessity!" says the Chief of State. "It is something without which life would become impossible. It's the essence of life itself, the essence of time, it's the true clock of all the clocks in Psychonia."

"My Voice," says the Princess, "is gentle and good, so that it becomes one with the Voice of the entire Deliria, my beautiful country, with its rivers and forests, my Prince, Deliria's country. I can feel what a patriot my Voice is!"

"Patriot?" says the Philosopher.

"Yes, patriot!" the Princess concludes.

"Why?" asks the Mother.

"Because in my country, Deliria, the entire nation can hear only one Voice, which means unity and patriotism. Nobody, not even the poorest citizen of the kingdom, can listen to another Voice, except for Deliria's Voice. My Prince also listens to this wonderful, gentle, musical Voice, Deliria's Voice!"

"I always have the Voice with me. It's always nagging me." says the Mother. "It doesn't let me have a minute of peace, it is always telling me to nurse my baby otherwise he will get sick. It keeps repeating me that for hundred thousand times into my mind. And I enjoy it very much!"

"Why, Mother!?" the Sweetie asks. "God forbid I become pregnant that I would immediately abort. Don't you leave anything inside me, ok?" she addresses to the Chief of State who says from his solemn posture:

"What is there to leave, Sweetie?"

"Clockmaker seed!"

"Clockmaker? Seed? Never! Chief of State seed, yes! That's normal. But the Chief of State doesn't have seed, he has little wheels by means of which the presidential clock and the democracy in the wonderful Psychonia function."

"I don't want your little wheels either, because I don't want to become pregnant and ruin this beautiful body!"

"Why shouldn't we have offspring?"

"Chief of State, what kind of offspring would you have? the Philosopher interfered" "What kind of offspring? If your seed is made of little wheels from the gearing of the clocks, then what are your children?" the Philosopher also asked.

"If my children are made from little clock wheels, then of course they will be Chiefs of State, just like me. They will be true men who will know to tell the exact time and more than that they will also learn to rule the country in a democratic way, that is, clockwise, that's how democracy functions in Psychonia."

"And you, Mother, why do you accept the Voice and why do you like to hear it although it is always nagging you with telling you to nurse your baby?" the Princess asked her.

"It's normal to love my Voice as long as it cares for my baby! For me, my baby is the dearest and the holiest thing in this world!"

"Maybe after the Prince returns from the war, we will have a baby, in a full moon night of love in one of the Destiny Tower chambers in Deliria." says the Princess.

"Would to God it were so!" says the Mother. "To be a Mother and to feel the baby

suckling at your breast, to feel the being you gave birth to, is the greatest joy in this world! Yes! Yes! Yes! I nurse him at my bosom! I nurse him!!!" shouted the Mother gesticulating with her hand in the air. "Voice, I understood! I'm taking care of the baby, of this wonderful baby!"

"I never want to be a mother!" said Sweetie.

Sitting on his knees at Sweetie's feet, the Bishop inattentively prays.

The Chief of State is standing in an upright and imposing posture and Sweetie is sitting in front of him, on the table.

"Can you hear me, Irene?"

"Yes, Sorin, I can hear you!"

"Please, ask the Mother what would she do if her Voice disappeared, if in stead of the baby she saw only a rag that covered no baby? But please, Irene, be careful how you ask her. Don't you tell her that her baby doesn't exist so that she doesn't have a shock! Just ask her what would be if, contrary to all reasons, her baby didn't exist any longer and she woke up in a morning without the Voice and realizing that all this baby story was just madness, but not that this would be in any way true? Ok, Irene?"

"Yes, Sorin. That's what I'm doing now." Irene keeps silent for a few moments then says: "The Mother says that first of all, all I'm feeling is not madness. I can't even accept the smallest idea about what it would be if I were crazy! If everything were madness and the baby didn't exist, then my Voice wouldn't exist either! Although my Voice is nagging me all the time, I need it badly! For me it's a vital necessity, I need it badly. It's exactly like drinking water or breathing the every day air. I would be dead without the Voice! I wouldn't be myself and I can't be someone else!"

"Exactly!" interfered the Philosopher. "You can't be someone else. I'll write down this sublime aphorism in my mind!"

"I'm not someone else!" continued the Mother. "I can't conceive I could be someone else, other than the mother of my child and this with the help of the Voice. In case I realized that all that represents the reason of my life doesn't exist and that this baby is a chimera, I would kill myself without any second thoughts!"

"Where is the Chimera?! Where is the Chimera?! Where is the Chimera?!" shouts the Hunter who wasn't yet untied. "My Voice whispers thundering, it burns me like live coals to look for the Chimera! To find that Chimera beast that hides from me and always runs away! Please, help me find the Chimera!" says the Hunter almost exhausted because of the excitement and the writhe of a little while ago and falling down with his head against the floor. Now he's hitting his head against the floor, harder and harder, until a few drops of blood trickle down on the floor. Eventually, he goes to a listlessness state maybe being dizzy after those strong hits. The Bishop runs out to the Hunter and wipes out with his hand the drops of blood that trickled down on the floor. Then he wipes out his face with the bloody hand soiling himself. Then he says:

"Blood is thicker than water! It's life! It's life! I'm drinking life! I'm drinking life!" the Bishop sucks his fingers while dancing joyfully.

"You are a Bishop, not a Vampire!" says the Philosopher.

"Philosopher, I'm not a Vampire! Who doesn't need life? Blood is life, I read it on a board in a doctor's office. If it is life, I want to have my fill of life, as much life as possible!"

"Give me some life!" the Sweetie cried to the Bishop.

"In Psychonia, I'll give you as much life as you want!" says the Chief of State somehow irritated that the Bishop succeeded to arouse Sweetie's interest and make her turn her eyes to him.

"So you won't give me some life?" repeated Sweetie upset by the Bishop's run away to the other corner of the room. Once he gets there he turns his head against the

wall, somehow trying to hide from the rest of the society, to be the only one who benefits of life.

"Irene, please ask your Voice what is its opinion on the Bishop's gesture of soiling himself with the Hunter's blood?"

"Sorin, my Voice is telling me that this time, through the Hunter's blood, the Bishop too will get contaminated with his Chimera. Just like the flu or the anthrax, the Chimera is a sort of contagious disease that is transmitted from one man to another. It's a serious disease."

"Did you ever suffered from the Chimera, Irene?"

"I don't recall!"

"What can you tell me about this disease?"

"From what I know, this disease contains some very, very small animals: bacteria. These are Chimera bacteria, bacteria that live in the blood of those who are sick of Chimera, just like in the Hunter's case."

"But the Hunter is looking for the Chimera with the naked eye, not with a microscope. He wants to kill it just like you kill a hyena." I say.

"You are very wrong, Sorin! The Chimera bacteria are inside him. He tries to kill the bacteria that make him always wander about, that he will never find, because they are inside him."

"Do you think that if I get infected with these Chimera bacteria I will become like the Hunter?"

"Anything is possible, Sorin!"

Chapter 9

Only then did I realize how sinuous and meaningless the ways of the Voice were. How far I was from that moment I would be able to say: "You miserable Voice, get out of Irene's mind!", and Irene would entirely agree. How strange this disease is. What games of reality it succeeds to imprint on the souls it takes into its possession. The Mother can't imagine a life without her child who is nothing else than her disease, just like the Chimera is the Hunter's disease, or the belief is the Bishop's disease. In her repulsive ugliness, the Sweetie thinks she's a top model, a beauty that can seduce anyone, anytime.

The Chief of State yearns for Sweetie and yet his disease consist in the clock obsession, the tick obsession, the clockwise democracy obsession, while the Philosopher's disease consist in the death of the theory, in the permanent search of an abstracting of a nonsense. The Princess is waiting for her eternal Prince in the Fate Tower, where she is imprisoned not by the life that keeps her in a never ending waiting of the Prince, but by the Faith that gave her the disease, by schizophrenia itself. I noticed how mean the Voice was in Irene's case, how it was trying to find logical any aberration, just to continue to stay in the empire of the Voice.

The fact that the Chimera had received a bacterium name and the desire for something impossible had received a disease name expressed the parallelism of Irene's

thinking because chasing a Chimera, as the Hunter did, was by no means an infectious disease but first of all a mental disease. But somewhere in all this amalgamated gearing, Irene's Voice forgot one of her weapons on the battle field, precisely because it tried to win by means of lie. Just as the Chimera as an idea can lead to a mental disease, the Chimera as a bacterium leads to another disease, an infectious one. In both cases, the Chimera was a dominant entity we should guard against and the first rung Irene would step on when she would get out of the dark dungeon where the disease was keeping her bound, to the light of the healing.

All I have to do is to imprint Irene the nonsense of chasing a Chimera. I will have to find out how were these patients of the Re-socialization Room in their normal life. How did they get sick? And all this in order to be able to create some parallelisms of ideas between Irene's history and their history, between Irene's Voice and their Voice, which will give me a greater power to fight against the Voice. I think this will be very difficult if not almost impossible as Irene experiences a time regression in a hypnosis state and she actually recalls the past without having the power to act.

My only salvation would be if, in that time, she were able to remember some words or comments of the medical staff regarding one patient or an other, from that period of her life that was so many years ago. The smallest clues could help me eventually build them a real profile of the life before the disease, profile which would help me a lot in my trying to help Irene recover.

These "colleagues" Irene's are, to a certain extent, an alter ego of her own, as during the trance session something as strange as mysterious happened to her.

Let's remember that many years ago, Irene really lived with these persons, in a period that is really a part of her life. The Bishop or the Mother, the Chief of State or the Princess, the Hunter, the Sweetie and the Philosopher are most likely characters that existed in reality, people affected by schizophrenia and hospitalized at the Crystal Center, a kind of mental institution, somewhere in Texas, not far from Dallas. But these characters, somehow picturesque in their disease, are not the really strange and mysterious thing, neither are their behavior and their strange conversations. This kind of outbursts, or, better said, this kind of conflicting behavior is normal for these patients who are in a more advanced stage of the disease, and it shouldn't surprise anyone. *The true strange and mysterious factor supervenes only the moment I ask Irene some questions. In turn, she asks some people those questions, people who existed in her past, in the Re-socialization Room from Crystal Center where Irene hasn't been for almost twenty years. All this time Irene was in trance. So, to put it shortly, she was talking from the present twenty years ago in the past, to some people who may have been dead now, if not all, at least some of them. And if some of them were alive, how could they answer from that past to the present Irene was in? She was asking in the past and the people from the past were answering into my present. Isn't that strange and mysterious?*

Would Irene have created in her mind a parallel world to ours, based only on some memories that she used as point of reference to create imagines and answers for the people in the Re-socialization Room? But, more than that, the patients' variety of different Voices, because as much as we would try to find a common denominator for them, it can only be schizophrenia. It can't deal with a certain stereotypy and by no means would Irene's Voice accept another one to replace it. Could this be a parallel universe Irene created in the trance state? One of the first things I will have to do will be to find some of her ex-"colleagues" from the Re-socialization Room, this time in flesh and blood, and to obtain their family or their legal guardian's permission to get them too into a trance state through hypnosis techniques so that I could give Irene's Voice an impulse.

But that only after I prove to myself that this method will work. So, I will first

create a conflict between Irene's Voice and another Voice of one of her "colleagues" from the Re-socialization Room. I will try to imprint doubt to that Voice and then I will have to supervise that Voice and also its beneficiary during the whole conflict so that in the end I could find him and see the precise stage of the disease he is in, once I imbued him with the doubt against his own Voice. Why don't I try this conflict the other way round sowing the doubt in Irene's Voice? Simply because it's impossible, as none of her "colleagues" is in trance in the hypnotic state, under my direct mental control as Irene is. I can't send any of them to Irene to ask her questions and I can't make them behave according to my desire.

The only person that I "control", to whom I can address directly, is Irene. I say that she is "controlled" because it's easy to see how reserved she is with regard to any attempt of eliminating the will of the Voice that paradoxically overlaps her own will. I can only address to the Sweetie, to the Chief of State or to any other patient through Irene. My hope consists in trying to address directly to the Sweetie or to the Chief of State or to any other person in the room by having him or her directly in trance with me. He or she would address to Irene's Voice beginning twenty years ago, until the present day. Maybe, by attacking her in this way I will succeed to really bind her Voice soul. From what I see, no matter how hard I tried I wasn't able to fight her Voice from my real state into her trance state.

The only solution would be that the Voices fight each other, through doubt, anxiety, and the vagueness of logic or of a sense, on their transcendental land. No matter how much will we have to try through this reality-transcendentally gate, I don't think we would make it. This kind of Voice can only be destroyed by another Voice. In any game of chess, no matter how ingeniously it might be considered and no matter how much one would win, the Voice has the great advantage of imposing its own reality and its own transcendental will. So that our game of chess would only be a kids game beside the highway where heavy trucks loaded with souls pass on at the top of their speed, to a precise destination.

How could some poor kids stop those trucks with their simple game? But the result could be different if one came with some tanks in front of those trucks. But, what if Irene created the answers of her "colleagues" with her own Voice's imagination? Then it means she created herself a universe that is parallel to ours, which has a temporality that is equivalent to ours. This could lead me to a total failure. But if it isn't so? This keeps my hopes high.

I'll have to create a strong conflict between the Voices, I'll have to resort to a diabolic diplomacy, that of dividing and conquering. Still, in the end I don't think it is good to sow doubt just in one Voice. If The Chief of State has been dead for many years or even for a day, that means our entire plan has failed.

I will surely have to open this conflict between the Voices and Irene with at least two or three Voices.

Although it would become very dangerous for Irene, the possibility the rival Voices attacked her in the transcendental level would be much higher if the Voices were in greater number. But also, the possibility that I find a Voice in flesh and blood, in the mind of some "colleagues" of Irene's would be much greater as the number of attacked Voices would be greater. In the end I decided that in this transcendental experiment I would just use three Voices, three of her six "colleagues". This would be the Princess, because, as Irene described her, she is younger and healthier, which offers me a greater possibility to find her alive after so many years, the Philosopher and the Mother.

I chose the last two at random. I will know that this experiment is successful only if I meet one of those characters. In case the transcendental fight was successful, those

characters should theoretically be cured and, what crowns it all, cured by help coming from the future, twenty years later.

Those people can now be perfectly normal if my experiment will succeed to go twenty years back in time. I wonder, if I talked to the Princess, which is now a respectable person, from twenty years ago, asking her to participate in a hypnosis session in order to help my wife, would she agree? After so much time, she probably forgot that she was once hospitalized, and that she sat next to the Lawyer, in the Resocialization Room.

What is sad is that the Lawyer, poor her, remained the Lawyer, and the Princess, the Philosopher or the Mother are probably happy people, with their families. Any life that is saved from the claws of this monster, which is Schizophrenia, represents a triumph. But how I wished the Lawyer was recovered. Maybe none of those characters recovered. Maybe the so-called transcendental conflict that was supposed to create *doubt* in the Voices' soul failed in any way. Maybe those poor mental disordered people are just like the Lawyer, their old "colleague", in the same position, living a parallel existence, with the theories of the Philosopher that are created and die, buried by his Voice. With the Mother who nurses her child. With the simply disgusting "sinuosity" of the Sweetie. With the generosity of the Chief of State, with the Princess eternally waiting and, of course, with the so serious but also childish Bishop. All these souls, beside the Lawyer, live their transcendental experience, which becomes normal for them. But not for us, those who live here. Every time I reach a deadlock, my thoughts take me far away, in Tibet, to that lamasery where, I can honestly tell you, I found myself, where the wise Lama told me, in a moment of illumination, that eventually I will find the Way, that there is a Way for anything and anybody, whether it is strewn with thorns or with the most precious stones. Each man has his Way, his destiny. In this case, I wouldn't like to find my Way just like a destiny. Being somewhere, at a crossroad, I wish this Way would become the good one, the one of success, of good luck. There are some questions that are haunting me: "What am I going to achieve from this experiment?" and "Are the Mother, the Princess and the Philosopher as sick as she is?" Will I have the power to keep fighting? And if I abandon this fight, what's left for me to do? To rebuild my life with another woman, trying to find in her what I once found in Irene, on the beach from Corpus Christi? That day when I had just arrived to the beach, at Corpus Christi, after having traveled by the greyhound for almost one day, leaving Dallas. That day when I felt for the first time how elevating, exuberant and wonderful it is when you truly love somebody, but also how painful and upsetting it is when you feel that this great feeling of love is being attacked or shaken from outside. There, in Corpus Christi, somewhere on the beach, I told Irene for the first time that I loved her. Hardly had I finished what I had to say that a huge wave covered us. In was lucky I could swim and thus I brought Irene to the shore. I still don't understand where that wave came from, because we were sitting on the shore with the water up to our knees. It is strange, isn't it? To tell your girlfriend "I love you" for the first time and to be swept away by a wave.

All I could wish for is to find a single "colleague", mentally recovered, recovery that would supervene twenty years ago, through an experience that I am going to start in a few seconds. This time I will have to fight not only Irene's Voice, but also three other voices, which will definitively revenge themselves on Irene's Voice. I am curious about what will happen. I will have to make a mental slalom, as correct as possible, so that the other Voices would not take Irene as a target, as their enemy, who wants to destroy them. First of all, my primary mission is to create doubt within their souls.

I'm watching Irene, inert, next to me. Maybe I shouldn't have remembered about Corpus Christi. Sometimes I feel like yelling, crying, breaking something. Now it is

definitively on of those moments.

"Can you hear me, my dear Irene?"

"Yes, Sorin!"

"Can you feel that my soul is here with you?"

"Somehow, Sorin!"

"Why just 'somehow', Irene?"

"Because the Voice makes me be somehow afraid of you."

"Tell your voice to be calm."

"Why, Sorin? Why would my Voice be calm?"

"You just tell it to relax."

"Why, Sorin?"

"Because I'm not against it."

"Are you trying again to hurt it, by devious ways, Sorin?"

"No! this time I'm not trying to hurt it at all."

"My Voice cannot believe that, Sorin!"

"Please, tell it!"

"Anyway, it doesn't believe you, Sorin!"

"Why not, Irene?"

"You are a fighter, Sorin!"

"I am, Irene, but this time I don't want to bother it."

"My Voice asks you if you would like to cease any kind of hostility."

"Oh", I said, with a shadow of regret in my voice.

"So, you agree to cease the hostilities, Sorin?"

I knew that this was not Irene speaking, but her Voice, which was probably thinking that I was exhausted or that I was going through a moment of weakness and thus it was trying to defeat me for good, with a finishing stroke. I don't know why, but yet I was aware that would set another trap, even more terrible, to this wretch Voice; just like a fighter on a battlefield, I found it somehow difficult to accept my own retreat, acknowledging defeat. Suddenly I remembered my experience in Tibet, with the illuminated Lama, where I understood that, if I lose a battle, it doesn't necessarily mean that I lose the war. Maybe that by losing this battle, this defeat would help me win the big war against the Voice. My answer was somehow evasive.

"Which hostilities?"

"So, from your answer, we should understand that there have never been the slightest disagreements", said Irene.

"Between me and you, Irene, I don't think so", I answered.

"But there have been serious disagreements between you and my Voice."

"Well, yes! It is true, Irene, that there have been some disagreements."

"Not some disagreements, Sorin, serious disagreements."

"Yes, Irene, there have been serious disagreements."

"So, you admit?" said Irene.

"Yes, Irene."

Anyway, being at continuous enmity with the Voice was not helping at all in my new strategy; on the contrary, it was an inconvenient. I wanted Irene's Voice to be my ally, which would not only resign itself to me, but first of all cooperate with me, even on the land of intelligence, in what was to come, in the war of doubt. In case a subject would wake up I would look everywhere and take him back in trance, this time trying the same battle, but with the Princess' or the Philosopher's or the Mother's Voice against the Lawyer's Voice.

"If you acknowledge your defeat, can you quit playing the chess game?"

"Yes, Irene, I quit playing the chess game. I feel incapable as against the

superiority of your Voice."

"But yet, my Voice feels a sort of fear, Sorin."

"Why, Irene?"

"Because she cannot understand why, all of a sudden, you chose to be defeated, without things to get dangerous for you, in a certain way."

"But I was in danger, Irene."

"How, Sorin?"

"I noticed that anything I would have tried to do against your Voice was useless. I realized that I couldn't do anything, which I was trying to pour the whole Pacific Ocean into a tin. I cannot fight your Voice.

Her profound mind goes beyond the limits of conventional and also fights the logic of unconventional itself, which I find very difficult to do, I'm just a mortal, limited by birth, and I can only understand what any human mind can comprise and nothing more. Your Voice has supernatural powers. It's impossible for me to fight it. I'm not a coward, I've never been, but I'm not the absurd guy who thinks he's better than everybody either."

I delivered this dissertation trying to convince Irene's Voice that I was really going to capitulate. Every word I said would have been true if I hadn't met the illuminated Lama who not only radically changed my life, but also taught me not to fear anything, to bravely face any hardships in life, to fight both against the conventional and the unconventional.

He gave me the courage to always stand my ground in the war against Irene's Voice, because losing a battle does not mean losing a war. I remembered all these in those painfully difficult moments when, after having sowed doubt in Irene's three Voices, her coming back to reality won't be as thought it would, a triumphant recovery of a soul who defeated its Voice, who defeated its own disease, Schizophrenia. It will be a sad recovery, where Irene will not be Irene, for the moment, my wife and Mark's mother, but she will remain, for who knows how much time from now on, the same cold "Mrs. Lawyer".

I feel that if I don't surrender this time, I am going to lose the war. I think this is the true paradox of winning or defeating in this chess game the Voice told me about once, without being able to understand it then, at first, when I agreed to start the game.

Irene didn't say a word. Her Voice is probably trying to consider my unexpected offer more profoundly. She is probably dissecting whether really I found the Paradox of being a winner or not, a paradox stating that you will be a winner only if you surrender. However, the Voice couldn't know my plan. I will be ready to return Irene to it, as I found her. But the word "return" is not correct because, in fact, I didn't even take her.

"Are you here, Irene?" I said after a while.

"I'm here, Sorin!"

"What has your Voice decided, Irene?"

"What do you mean, Sorin?"

"Does she agree to make peace?"

"The Voice asks me if this "peace" is peace, Sorin."

"Assure it that it is peace, Irene."

"What else can you offer it for peace?"

"I don't see what else I could offer, except my surrender!"

"How can we be sure that you surrendered?"

"I think that everything I've told you so far was quite convincing. I don't see what else I could offer."

Irene is again silent, as she was before. I know that right now her Voice is

considering as intensely as possible whether it should accept my surrender or not. I only wish it doesn't discover my plan, thus becoming a more dreaded enemy, which, in stead of underestimating me, would consider me among its prospective major rivals. Anyway, I don't think it would consider so far, since I was going to leave this hospital and leave Irene in its possession. I also wonder whether my decision was the right one. As regards the Princess, the Philosopher and the Mother ... the Princess, as I thought, is acceptable, for her youth and vitality. The Philosopher, for what? Maybe the doubt in his soul would be much more destructive than in Sweetie's soul, for example. Why? Because the multitude of ideas, theories and other things in the Philosopher's Voice would lead to an exploration of the transcendental logic of ideas that would be much more powerful than in Sweetie's mind and, of course, much more sarcastic for the Philosopher's Voice. The Mother also seem like a good choice, because the ideas of her Voice rely on a maternal phenomenon, which, by impulsion from her Voice, referring to doubt, would remind her of her real child, a decisive factor in her recovery process. Eventually, I decided to become more trenchant with Irene's Voice, by saying:

"So, Irene, your Voice doesn't trust me completely?"

"Not completely, Sorin."

"If I told her that I would stop this dialogue with you, leaving the room just like that, would she trust me?"

"Do you want to leave, Sorin?" Irene asked.

"Yes, Irene. I will leave, but after I spend a few more moments with you, because I haven't seen you for a long time and, as you know it very well, I missed you."

"OK, Sorin, let me ask my Voice."

"Go ahead, Irene."

"My Voice tells me that it has not made up its mind yet."

"Even if I leave, Irene?"

"Even if you leave, Sorin."

"What should I do so that your Voice be reassured?"

"Do you agree to its ideas?" Irene asked.

"Yes, Irene, what your Voice says is perfect."

"So, my Voice is always right, Sorin?"

"You are right Irene, your Voice is always right."

"And what then, are you going to leave, after you spend some more time with me?"

"Yes, Irene, I am going to leave."

"And then never ... please, listen to what I have to tell you now. You will never, and I mean never, confront my Voice again, in one world or another."

"Irene, what do you mean by that ... in what world?"

"In one world or another, says the Voice."

"But Irene, I live and I exist only in this world."

On that very moment, I felt a shiver seizing my soul. What did the Voice mean by "in one world or another" Did she mean a possible confrontation at a transcendental level? Maybe that is what she meant. Could she thwart my plans with her diabolic intelligence? I don't know that ... All of a sudden, another shiver made its way, but this time I felt peaceful. I will never confront the Voice, not even on the transcendental level; that was going to be someone else, someone who knew Irene, who has shared with her at least one moment in her life when she was possessed by the Voice and that someone would also have his Voice, a Voice communicating with that of Irene, in transcendence. And if that someone else one day challenges Irene's Voice, then it will be something different, even if that as a reaction to my demand. As for me, I will never confront Irene's Voice. That chess game I was playing with Irene's Voice is finally

over.

"Irene, you can tell your Voice that I will never challenge her, not even in another world and I will let her reign in peace in your mind and soul."

"Yes, Sorin. My Voice says that this time it accepts your surrender. We can be friends, Sorin."

"So, Irene, you mean that the hostility is over?"

"That is true, Sorin. There will be no controversy between us, whatsoever."

When I heard Irene uttering such words and seeing that she had accepted so happily this darned mental disorder, I recalled Corpus Christi when we were lovers, friends, though so differently. How diverse friendship can be ...

"Irene, before going away I would like us to go back to the Re-socialization Room, because I like it there."

"To the Re-socialization Room?" Irene answered me by another question.

"Yes, Irene."

"The Voice is asking me why we do have to go to the Re-socialization Room and not someplace else?"

"I told you already. I like it there!" I said.

"Why would you like it there and not somewhere else?"

I was aware that this time I had to find a reason as persuading as when I surrendered in the chess game I had played with Irene's Voice. I wavered and not gave her an immediate answer, trying to think over the reason I was going to invoke. The Voice may have seized that wavering, since it asked me roughly:

"Why don't you answer?" said Irene.

"Actually that is what I was going to do."

"If there hadn't been anything you had to hide as concerns the Re-socialization Room, you would have answered me on the spot."

"That is true. The first time I answered without hesitating, while then, when you requested further reasons, I thought it was normal to take my time and think, searching for certain reasons that I did not actually have. Irene, your Voice is asking me for more reasons why I had to choose the Re-socialization Room."

Then I knew that the Voice was afraid of my plotting against her. I knew that she would consider all the possibilities, as far as I was concerned, and she would most certainly end by not finding any that could incriminate me. I was also aware that Irene's Voice was not expecting challenges from somebody else, especially not from schizophrenic persons twenty years ago. In the end, I congratulated myself for the answer I offered the Voice. "Without a specific reason" ... "just because it makes me feel well there" ... and so on.

"My Voice agrees upon going back to the Re-socialization Room."

"Tell your Voice that I thank her for the friendship I was awarded with and of course, for her understanding!"

"The Voice tells me that you should stop flattering her. You may become mysterious and that is not good."

That was true, indeed. If I became mysterious to the Voice, she could have prevented us from going back to the Re-socialization Room and that could turn out to be a real disaster that I fully resented.

"Where are you, Irene?"

"I am in the Re-socialization Room."

"Are you alone?"

"No, Sorin. I am not alone."

"Who else is there?"

"The Sweetie, the Philosopher, the Princess, the Bishop, Mother and the Chief of

the State."

"Thank God!" I said to myself, that we have left behind that stage that, at the time being, had given me the thrills. It was only in the last moment that I realized what would have happened, if Irene had been alone in the Re-socialization Room. It would have meant a real tragedy. No matter how hard I could have tried to ask the Voice to bring Irene back to her 'colleagues' group, she would have probably rejected me, since she would have understood that all those people were putting up a plot.

"How is the Princess, Irene?"

"She is making envelopes for the Prince, that's what she's doing."

"Would you like to go closer to the Princess, Irene?"

"Why would I do that Sorin?"

"I would like to ask her how she has been going."

"All right, Sorin!"

"What about your Voice, Irene?"

"She's happy, somehow."

"Why is that?"

"Because she likes it now that you are interested in another world and not in me, as before."

"That's fine, Irene. Tell her that I gave up taking care of you anyway."

"She has understood that, Sorin and she is asking when you will be leaving?"

"As soon as possible, Irene."

"When exactly?"

"I don't know for sure."

"The Voice wants you to be more precise!"

"Meaning?"

"Meaning that she wants you to mention a limited period of time."

"Such as an hour?"

"That is too long."

"Then the Voice should tell me what time she considers convenient?"

"The Voice grants you thirty minutes, not a second longer."

"That is fine with me, I answered, thinking that I will have plenty of time to carry out my plans."

"I am near the Princess. Sorin, she has asked me what I wanted from her?"

"Tell her that you only passed by, to see what she had been doing!"

"I told her, Sorin. The Princess is thinking over and over at her beloved Prince who has left to fight against the Deliria's foes."

"Could you ask her where exactly is that battle taking place?"

"I could, Sorin. The Princess tells me that it is on the mountain borders of the beautiful realm of Deliria."

"Ask her whether she has been keeping in touch with the handsome Prince?"

"She told me that he sends her long love letters every day."

"Ask her what is the address of the Prince?"

Her answer came somehow fearfully. "Why do you ask? What have you got to do with my prince?"

"Tell her that you need his help in a state matter."

"She wants to know 'What kind of matter' is it all about?"

"You can assure her of your best intentions and you could also tell her that an acquaintance of yours, named Sorin, that is me, wants to get an approval regarding an investment at a company in Deliria. Tell her that I deal with the manufacturing of specific parts for construction plants. Since constructions have been so much developed, since they hold such an important share of Deliria's national fortune and

since Deliria's specialists have such a vast experience in this field, I want to invest some money in this industry, which will most certainly bring me profit."

"The Princess told me that it is true that the constructions' industry is very well developed in Deliria and that is why there are so many investors coming from abroad. The trouble is that Deliria's construction specialists have focused on a certain type of buildings."

"What is that type of constructions that the constructors in her beautiful country Deliria have focused on?"

"The Princess is telling me that all the constructors build only Destiny Towers, where Deliria's inhabitants live together."

"That is excellent, Irene! Please, tell her that that is exactly what I want to build: Destiny Towers and if possible, I would like to export them to other countries, too."

"The Princess says that the Destiny Towers are a genuine national symbol of Deliria, while the coat of arms of this realm bears, that goes without saying, a Destiny Tower. The princess assures me of her special friendship towards me and you, Sorin and she is willing to do everything she can to help you. She also told me that she loves all the people who want to invest in the Destiny Towers from Deliria."

"That is why, Irene, you will have to ask her the Prince's address, so that I can ask for his approval for what I intend to do."

"The Princess is glad to help you and she says that it is enough to write on the Prince's envelope just 'To His Majesty, Prince of Deliria' and, instead of the address, you should write 'The mountain border where the battle against Deliria's foes is fought'. The Princess is sure that the Prince will help you, because anyone who is interested in investing in the Destiny Towers from Deliria can make him happy."

"Tell the Princess that I thank her so much for her help and that I will notify her as for my keeping in touch with the Prince."

That was wonderful. I am happy that I somehow managed to get under the Princess's skin. From now on, I felt free to sow the seeds of doubt that will inevitably lead her into a dull, inner fight her own Voice and it will bring her the recovery, as a happy ending. Otherwise, she will be still the prisoner of this ordinary and miserable residual schizophrenia.

"This time I would like to greet the Philosopher, too."

"Why not?"

It made me laugh when I thought of the prank I had put up for Irene's Voice, since the real chess game was only now starting to flare up. At the same time, I recall how right Irene's Voice was when it told me that the rules that were to govern the chess game of Irene's Life were going to be the Paradoxes.

"How is the Philosopher, Irene?"

"He is thoughtfully resting on a chair, near the window."

"Tell him that I love his philosophical theories and that I have read those in his published tomes."

"I told him that, Sorin. The Philosopher wants to know who you are."

"Tell him that I am one of your acquaintances, named Sorin Cerin and that of course, I am keen on Philosophy."

"The philosopher appreciates this passion of yours and he thanks you for having managed to read all the tomes he had published up to now. He has also mentioned that he could send you an autograph, if you wanted!"

"Of course I want one!"

"The Philosopher signs his name, without holding anything you could write with in his hand. I meant that he had no pencil, ball pen, chalk or anything else to write with. The Philosopher also says that now he shall send you the autograph you asked for

directly on the wall, through the wall. It writes like this: *'Dear acquaintance of the Bright Attorney, the philosophies' philosophy of the philosophies' philosophies is not to think of anything'*""

"Irene, please ask the Philosopher how he could deliver such a great statement within the autograph he sent me?"

"That is simple, said the Philosopher."

"Simple?" I asked, confused.

"Yes, Sorin. The Philosopher tells me that it is simple."

"Irene, I understood that he said it was simple, but now ask him why does he find that simple? Ask him to explain that to us."

"The Philosopher says that any theory, no matter how genial that could be, there will be another theory, even more genial, that will prevail over the initial one."

"But Irene, you have to ask the Philosopher whether that genial theory prevailing over the first genial theory will be taken over by another theory, even much more genial, prevailing over the first two?"

"The Philosopher tells me that this is not all. 'There is a theory alleging that a theory, no matter how genial that could be, will be always taken over by an even more genial theory, which makes us state that there is no genial theory. There is simply a misfortune for the human brain, a trouble that is the instrument of those darn Voices torturing us'. I guess the Philosopher is not right here, Irene interfered. 'Thus, we are tormented by some miserable Voices, said the Philosopher. Their womb distorted by so many theories that were thought to be genial when they came out can also shelter the torments of those philosophers who have created such theories and who are now the feats of simple and tormenting Voice. Those theories turn out not to have been so genial, since they didn't have the power to hide or to fight by their own truth against the Voices. They have been so bad, that any illiterate Voice could feed on them. 'That is the great pain.' said the Philosopher. 'The more I think a theory is better, or more indestructible, more genial, the more my Voice gets fatter and fatter, by feeding herself on my theory and by becoming more powerful. Thus, it will fight back on me, but ten times, one hundred times, million of times more powerful, tormenting me in the most barbarian way possible. That is the paradox of my life. I can get rid of the Voice only by means of such an unfailing and powerful theory, that my big bellied and greedy womb should fail to rip it off, as a tiger attacking a gazelle. This theory will be the one that would attack the Voice, destroying her, feeding on her disgusting blood coming from the corpses of the weak and fearful theories that were not able to fight or run away. If it wasn't for the Voice, I would never write philosophy, I would never need to deliver not even one single theory. The wish to get rid of the Voice, to brake free of her treacherous chains gives me the hope that someday I will deliver a theory that will win her over.' That is what the Philosopher told me, Sorin."

"Irene, I would like to thank you also for sending these words and to the Philosopher for sharing his pain with me."

"I will tell him that, Sorin!"

This time, it is me who must deliver a theory to the Philosopher that could kill his Voice, to rip it off as a tiger tears a gazelle. But what could that theory be? What should it look like? What coordinates should it be focused on? To find that out, I should have another small talk with the Philosopher. It is only now that I realize that the Philosopher seems to be the least ill of all the others.

Although he hates his Voice and he would do whatever it takes to chase it away, although the very sense of his being is fighting against the Voice, I came to see that his Voice will be the least obedient, as compared to the Voices of the other people that are even cherished and adored by the sick persons, or ignored – as it happens with the one

of the Princess. It is only now that I realize how hard it will be for me to find a theory, on the Philosopher's behalf, a theory that could win his Voice over. I hope from all my heart that at least one of these sick men will recover and meet me in this future time I am waiting for.

Had I found all of them in sickness, there would be nothing left for me to do, because of the Voices that would interfere while these people were in a trance, by annihilating the will and the impulse that I need to destroy Irene's Voice.

"Irene, please tell this to the Philosopher."

"I listen, Sorin."

"Tell him that it is him who wrote that in the autograph text: '...The philosophies' philosophy is not to think of anything.' Isn't that so? Ask him, please!"

"The Philosopher told that what you said is true!"

"Then tell him that the most unfailing theory that the Philosopher might want for his Voice will be a philosophical theory about Nothing. Ask him why he didn't think of such a theory?"

"He told me that for some time he has been trying to create an almost infinite number of theories, but he didn't think of one about nothing. The Philosopher says that nothing engenders nothing, but Sorin, the Philosopher wants to know where the thought and the existence come from?"

"The thought and the existence come from God, Irene."

"I have informed him about that and he wants to know how it is possible that nothing should not be created by God, too?"

"Irene, tell him that nothing is created by God, too. God created anything a human being can think of."

"The Philosopher says that if nothing means nothing, that it cannot have been created by God, because He creates something and we cannot state the God creates nothing. So, it means that He doesn't create anything, meaning that he doesn't do anything!"

"Tell the Philosopher that God gave us our conscience. Thus any notion existing within our conscience is an entity, an illusion actually, within our conscience. Once there is this illusion of nothing, then nothing as an entity exists. Our life is also an illusion, though a collective one, meaning that all the people share certain common features of this illusion, such as the senses. For example, there are no people on Earth that were born with thirty five senses; we are all born with the same number of senses. That is why we can say that life is an illusion that we live at a collective level. Any notion within our conscience is an illusion. Even when we do the simplest mathematical computations, such as the addition and the subtraction, it is still an illusion. *Life is a dream of an illusion and that's that. Even if we dream all the time, from our birth till we die.* Is there an illusion in itself? The answer is yes, you Philosopher, it exists as a simple notion of our conscience, as nothing and that is all, this time, even if all the notions are still an illusion that carries us on to life's dream. Therefore, this nothing exists for us, for each and every of us as a notion we could not live without, since the Absolute, the Absurd and the Essence itself do not refer to infinity. They refer to Nothing!"

Everything that we think or do is referred to this nothing we are talking about.

Why is that so? Because it is both the upper and the low limit of things. Everything that we consider as existing could not be there if it wasn't for this unfailing Nothing. The existence itself, with all its attributes is also referred to this mysterious Nothing.

Everything, except for God, the Great Creator of the Universe. He is not referred to this limit which is actually this Nothing, because He created everything and He does not need any reference, any landmark to be referred to.

If we utter infinite, it will refer to the finite and this one, at its turn, will refer to Nothing. If we utter eternity, it will refer to periodic and this one will refer to Nothing again. If we utter the Great Creator of the Universe, if we say God, we realize that any attribute we may bring would not be a plausible one, because God is more than the eternity and than the infinite.

God created both the first and the last spirit boundary which is the Nothing. -the boundary that God shaped for the human being.

Could we say that God means just the infinite?

Than it would mean that we refer Him to Nothing, since the infinite itself has Nothing as reference mark. It goes the same for the eternity. Saying that God is infinite and eternal is just a figure of speech, that renders its superiority, both in time and in space; but we have to admit that in fact, God is superior to such infinite and eternity issues. He is the very Unstarted beginning and the Endless Ending of the Universe. He is the Great Creator of the Universe, of the spaces and of the Human being times.

That is why, dear Philosopher, you were right when you said that the philosophies' philosophy is the Nothing, though you forgot to mention something that could make your theory become so strong as to win over your Voice. The enunciation, dear Philosopher, is as follows: 'The philosophies' philosophy of the Being is God'. I mentioned the Being, because I am referring to the human being, as an archetype. Maybe that could help you in your life, Philosopher!"

"Sorin, I told the Philosopher everything you said. I asked him whether he wanted to tell you something too, but he was so thoughtful, that I cannot get through to him. Nevertheless, my Voice would like to ask you 'Why do you want to destroy the Philosopher's Voice?'"

"Tell your Voice, Irene, that I am not the one who wants to destroy her. It is the Philosopher himself! So it is his wish, not mine! I no longer have any objection towards another Voice."

"Is that so, Sorin?"

"Yes, that is true, Irene."

"Very well, then, the Voice tells me."

"I would like you to tell something to the Mother, too."

"That is alright, Sorin! But my Voice wants you to hurry, because twenty minutes have already passed, which means that you only have ten more minutes and then I will ask you to leave, Sorin!"

"Fine, Irene! Ten minutes will do. Tell your Voice that I thank her for her generosity."

"I told her, but she didn't answer me back."

"I don't mind that, Irene. I just want to see how Mother is and then I will say good bye to everybody. I should not forget to leave a message for the Princess, too."

"What kind of message do you want to send her? Is that a plot against my Voice, Sorin?"

"No, not at all, Irene! The message has nothing to do with your Voice! I just want to thank her for her help, for giving me the address where I can find the Prince. Tell her that I have already started the investment in Deliria. In case she does not know that, you can inform her that I was invited in person to the Prince's residence, but when I paid him the visit, the Prince was with another Woman, whom he would kiss and call her his Princess. When I told him about the Princess waiting for him in the Destiny Tower, he answered me that he had long left that one and that he didn't actually fight any battle. His leaving to fight for Deliria was just a well plotted excuse to brake free from the Princess in the Destiny Tower who would bore him to death."

"Did the Prince of Deliria tell you all these things?"

"Yes, Irene! He told me that. And if you will not tell that to the Princess, then this is your business! Maybe she ought not to know all these about the prince", I said, showing myself fully disinterested in whether she sent my message to the Princess or not. That was meant not to raise any doubts in the logic of Irene's Voice. If the message was sent, then it would sow the real seeds of doubt in the Princess's soul.

"Sorin, my Voice tells me that she wants me to immediately send this message to the Princess, because she pities her and because she doesn't want this girl to wait all her life for that miserable Prince, who mocks her. It is still the Voice that opened my eyes, again, and told me what scoundrel men can be and how they laugh at women's love.

The Voice tells me that all men behave as the Prince has. That includes you too, Sorin!" I couldn't say anything else. Due to her bluntness and malice, the Voice made a wrong movement in this imaginary chess game where the pieces do not actually need a certain color. It is only now that I see why the Voice wanted to play with colorless pieces. Following a short brake, Irene said:

"You should know that I told the Princess the entire truth!"

"And what did she say, Irene?"

"What could she say? She is depressed. She had started to weep. The Princess has had a real crisis, Sorin! She is so agitated, she cries so loud, that even white angels from the sky have come to take her out of the Re-socialization room."

"I feel sorry for her, Irene!" But inside, I barely managed to repress a cry of joy, knowing that the doubt will always eat up the Princess, until her recovery.

"Sorin, there is no point in introducing you to the Mother, because the Voice told me that there only one minute left."

"The last minute?"

"Yes, Sorin, the last minute!"

"Please, Irene, remember only one thing, in these last seconds that we have. Concentrate deep inside and tell me if you ever heard the white angels talking about one of your colleagues: the Sweetie, the Philosopher, the Chief of the State, the Mother or the Bishop?"

"I am trying to remember, Sorin. I don't know for sure. I cannot remember that.... Though, they may have mentioned the Philosopher. He is a teacher at a University in Chicago. They said that he was a teacher at a University in Chicago, as I remember...but that is all, nothing more. The Voice tells me that there are ten more seconds and everything shall be over."

"I love you, Irene! I will save you some day, don't forget that!"

"Good bye, Sorin!"

Suddenly, Irene has started to open her eyes lids, slowly and she was looking at me somehow sleepy. Then she gained back her briskly look.

"Well, how do you feel, Irene?" I asked, curiously.

"I feel well, Sir, but I think we don't know each other so well as to call ourselves by our names. Actually, I don't know too many things about you ... just that you have a wife who suffers from schizophrenia. What other hints can you provide to support that divorce? If you got along well, than you shouldn't get divorced, Sir! Stay with her for the rest of your life!"

"That is what I intend to do, I said. So, dear lady attorney, it has been nice to meet you. I will leave now, because I have to go back to New York now. That's where I live."

"But we are in New York right now ... what do you mean by going back to New York?"

"I am sorry, lady attorney! I said respectfully. You are right, we are in New York! I am so confused because of this divorce that I do such childish mistakes!"

The reality was completely different. My poor Irene was actually at the outskirts of another metropolis – Miami - at about ten hours of fast driving far from New York. I didn't want to correct her because I wanted her to communicate with me, even if I couldn't save her then.

When I left, I wanted to kiss her, but I knew that I wasn't allowed to do that. Me, her husband, I was a stranger to Irene. I called a white angel who opened the door. I had spent almost seven hours with Irene. That was breaking a record for me. Mark had fallen asleep, waiting for me on a couch on one of the endless corridors of the sanatorium. I shook him gently and he had startled, not knowing what was going on. He got over that quickly. He told that he had fallen asleep while he was waiting and he didn't even realize that. Anyway, I knew how tired he must have been, since he had come all the way from New York to see his mother. I took him there, to say good bye to his mother and I warned him to be as formal as possible, because he was going to talk to an attorney, not to his mother. Mark understood that.

I felt that he was going to burst into tears when he said: "Good bye, Mrs. Attorney! Me and my father, we thank you for helping us with that divorce case involving my mother!" When he had uttered the word 'mother', I felt him choking on the sounds of this sacred word and he could hardly utter them. So that I had to interfere:

"Thank you once again, lady attorney and if that will be your wish, we will remain your clients. Who knows what the future has in store for us?"

"You should be glad if you don't become by clients, because people look for me when they have troubles with the law, not when they are happy!"

That was true, somehow, because I came to the sanatorium due to such troubles, to the misfortune of having a wife who suffered from such a terrible disease.

Happiness could have never brought me to that sanatorium. If destiny had given me joy, my wife would have been home with me now, in Brooklyn, New York.

I remember that when I was getting ready to leave, I looked once more at the sanatorium's building and I swore to myself that I will do whatever it took to heal Irene. I was so obsessed by that thought that, at a certain moment, I found myself muttering words aloud.

Mark couldn't help from saying:

"What's the matter, dad? Are you talking to yourself, now?"

I didn't know what to say. I smiled, I pushed on the acceleration and I got away like a whirlwind, heading over to the highway home.

We were both suffering, we both felt like doing whatever it took to save Irene. We would have given up anything so that Irene could be with us, but the Destiny Tower we had to live in, me and Mark, had cold, austere and unmerciful walls. We had to cope with lots of sufferance.

On the way home, I was tormented by all sorts of dark thoughts, such as the fact that I was doing the biggest mistake of my life by accepting this somehow unconventional recovery method for Irene. I was wondering whether everything I intended to do was impossible.

What if the Philosopher and the Princess are as ill? What if they died?

How could I have been such an idiot and think that today, July the twenty fifth, two thousand and two, I could heal some people trapped in their past, on July twenty fifth, the year nineteen eighty two? Wasn't that a childish or even foolish thing to do, that would lead to a disastrous ending in Irene's life?

I was convinced that I, Sorin Cerin, the real husband of Irene, was no longer able to get something from her Voice. Maybe it would have been wiser to beg the Voice to show me a kind of return door? Maybe! But that miserable Voice would not accept to face such an issue, she would rather do her best to get rid of me. She knew that I was a

potential enemy of hers, if not a most fierce one.

Anyway, had I not tried the off chance or had I not sought for the needle in the haystack, I still wouldn't have any chance left. All of a sudden it just crossed my mind that Albert Einstein in his theory of relativity stated that time passes according to the speed of light. That means that time can contract and dilate.

Let alone the theory of tachyons which are those basic particles for whom the time passes from the past, through the present and into the future, where it turns round and comes back from the future to the past. All these have managed to bring a ray of peace in my soul.

Even if Irene eventually recovers, for me it will be a mystery how one can act from the future, from a relatively remote future, which, for me and Irene, is present, in order to change the past. Moreover, we were not only years away from the moments when Irene was in the Re-socialization Room, but, from the spatial point of view, we were in some other place, somewhere in a sanatorium in Miami, Florida, as compared to the location where the event took place, namely in Dallas, Texas.

Why shouldn't I admit that our life is a mystery from the day we are born to the last moment, plenty fed with the Illusion of our senses, both the Illusion of our conscious and the one of our subconscious. Anyway, on that moment, I didn't want to wish, think, but rather to Believe. I wanted to believe in anything: in God, in a chance, in a happening, in the rain drops that were blackening the asphalt or in Sorin. Maybe on that decisive moment of my life, I understood how much we need to Believe in something, without asking why or how, unconditionally and inevitably.

We need to Believe and that's it. Without it, we would be not only much more estranged from ourselves, we would lie ourselves with all kinds of things, which we would know that are not true, but, moreover, we would be defeated. This is what the beauty and the mirage of Faith resides in, namely not to give up, not to accept the lie that we Know as Truth and to give the Illusive Truth, which is nothing else but meaning, our Faith, the Mystery that will become Destiny.

Thus, by loving God, we accept destiny, devouring each throb of passion, love, desire, curse or elevation under the times that are gone of so much timeless, in an ancestral past somewhere in the future. For all these we discovered the need for bells and altars and cathedrals, but also for bawdy houses, pubs and passions.

We are born to suffer, maybe that's why we created a God of passions in Christ who, grieved, suffers on the cross, passions that are at the antipodes of the human being, such as sacrifice, love for people's welfare in contradiction to the passions of people, consisting in baseness, alcoholism, all kinds of foul actions, adultery and so on. The qualities of our God will always be at the antipode of our attributes because we want to see in our God what we don't have.

That's why, to a large extend, the peoples' religions expressed nothing else but what their followers didn't have and what they would have liked to reach.

From religions, people understood that they had to fight against the Illusion of Life, without allowing to be defeated by the relativity of the truths that were surrounding them, accepting as supreme attribute of God everything that was best in themselves, but so far from their soul, at the same time being committed to understand that the Illusion of Life doesn't make them sing in a church chorus, but fight in order to subsist, which makes them dependant of the passion of life, the passion of existing.

However, they prey to God, trying to breathe the desire of never giving in, of fighting against the eternal self-alienation, which is life, and, moreover, to always remember that somewhere, at the antipodes of each human soul, there are those ancestral places, which existed before time and birth, the real love, the sacrifice for your neighbor, honesty, modesty and, last but not least, the true happiness, which resides in

fulfillment. But this is somewhere far away from the struggle of life, somewhere towards what civilizations have seen in God.

Chapter 10

At a certain moment, I started to smile. Something was telling me that my fearing with regard to Irene was groundless, that eventually I would defeat that terrible Voice that keeps her encaged in its delirium. I wonder if the pretty ex-Princess of Deliria will help me. Or maybe the Philosopher? We shall see. Tomorrow, first thing in the morning, I will take the plane from New York to Crystal Medical Center in Dallas, this center that is specialized in physical disorders and I will try to find out something about the Philosopher, Sweetie, Mother, Bishop and the others. I would like to know as much as possible about their lives, but first of all I would like to find out if these characters really existed or if they were real only at who knows what mental level to which the Voice might have taken Irene.

I haven't thought of this aspect before. What if none of those characters exist? What if they were some mere phantasmagorias of Irene's Voice? What if Irene's Voice itself tried, in this way, to trick me and I swallowed the bait like an idiot? I don't think that this could have been possible because Irene described them in action and, most important, she communicated with these characters. However, I felt some cold shivers on my spine thinking about what would have happened if Irene's Voice had served me such a trick.

I would have lost everything because of my own absence of mind. I should have taken all precautions, in such a chess game, with regard to the authenticity of the regression.

And, yet, there was one thing that reassured me. When I started the regression with Irene, it was not Irene who accepted to be subjected to hypnosis, but the Lawyer. On that moment, Irene was just the Lawyer and nothing else. The Lawyer who wanted to help in the divorce proceedings with Irene.

Why hasn't the Lawyer mentioned anything about Irene, when she woke up from the trance?

Why hasn't the Lawyer told me whether it is worth for me to divorce Irene or not? What did it see under hypnosis, related to Irene's divorce proceedings? That's a mystery!

The divorce was only up to me. Hasn't the Lawyer allowed to be hypnotized precisely in order to help me find Irene somehow? Is Irene's Voice a different Voice from the Lawyer's?

I don't think so. I think the Voice does the same thing that the illuminated Lama once told me: "keeps her in a transition space, which belongs and does not completely belong to a certain dimension." Maybe that's why the Voice confers her a personality that belongs to two different spaces, but it keeps both personalities, the visible Lawyer and the hidden Irene, under the same miserable terror.

I remember how deep my thoughts were while I was driving. At a certain moment,

instead of driving on the right side, I took the left side, like in Australia. I almost caused a terrible car accident if it hadn't been for Mark who was next to me, and shouted at the last moment: "What are you doing, dad?!!?" Only then I realized that I was looking at a high tonnage truck that was driving towards us, only a few meters in front of us. I was looking at the truck indifferently, as if it was normal that it be in front of me, and I drive on the left side of the road. In a fraction of a second I turned to the right traffic lane and the truck passed by us honking stridently. If Mark, who dozed off peacefully bending the back of the chair down, hadn't waken up, we would have definitively been dead now.

The strident honk of the truck woke Mark up. I hadn't even heard it and, although I was looking at the truck coming rapidly closer, I hadn't actually seen it. Eventually, we arrived home, in New York. It was about three o'clock in the morning. Mark went to his room, in which he spends his time when he is not too "busy" at the College. Anyway, I'm proud of my son.

So far, he has not done anything so wrong that I couldn't forgive him for. With regard to studying ... he is not among the crammers who only get "very good" marks, but he is a mediocre to good student.

That's what I want. Sometimes I'm happy when Mark does something stupid or takes a bad mark at school. I wouldn't like him to be some kind of exceptional, of genius and then, a client of who knows what mental hospital, especially since, speaking from the hereditary point of view, he would have a greater chance than other young people of his age to be a patient in a specialized sanatorium.

I could honestly say that ever since Irene became mentally disordered I have read a lot of books on Schizophrenia, trying to understand as well as possible this terrible malady.

First thing in the morning, the next day, I went to the airport and took the plane to Dallas, Crystal Medical Center. At the information desk I met a thin woman, except that thin, in her case, meant skeleton-like, who advised me to talk to Dr. Kaufmann about the mental disordered people who had been hospitalized in the clinic several years ago. After almost one hour, while I was cooling my heels in Kaufmann's waiting room, his assistant asked me, as polite as possible, to come in. Kaufmann, a tall, stout guy, about sixty years old, with fair hair but growing bald, asked me to have a seat on one of the chairs in front of his desk.

"How can I help you, Mr. ...?"

"Sorin Cerin."

"Yes, Mr. Cerin, I'm listening", said Kaufmann after taking a good piercing look at me, allowing me to notice his light blue eyes.

"Twenty years ago, in this clinic, Irene Anderson, who became Irene Cerin eighteen years ago, was hospitalized for psychiatric treatment."

"How can I help you, Mr. Cerin?"

The truth was that I didn't know how I could better explain this Dr. Kaufmann about my experience that was rather verging on the paranormal than on an ordinary conventional therapy.

"My wife suffers from residual schizophrenia and she has been hospitalized for many years in a sanatorium, close to Miami, Florida. Some time ago, I was in Tibet where I had lived for one month in a lamasery. There, I was initiated by an illuminated Lama in certain transcendental, behavior and hypnosis techniques. Well, doctor, I tried to apply on my own wife what I had learned in Tibet, trying to help her recover."

"So you hypnotized her?"

"Yes."

"How was her mental disorder exteriorizing?"

"She thinks she's a Lawyer."

"A Lawyer?"

"Yes."

"What is her relation to you?"

"To me? She doesn't recognize me and, moreover, she doesn't recognize her son, either. I saw her yesterday. She cold and passive, looking down at us and somehow arrogantly from her position as a jurist. She, as a Lawyer, was to represent me in my divorce proceedings that, ostensibly, I was instituting against my wife, Irene Cerin who, if fact, is her, except that she doesn't realize it. In wakeful state she is the Lawyer, but in trance she became Irene again, but a different Irene than the one I knew. Totally different."

"What do you mean?"

"A soul that is locked and controlled by a Voice who interferes within her thoughts, her feeling and, most of all, her behavior."

"Yes, yes, yes ... I see."

"Once I got her in hypnotic trance, I started to explore her past, trying to find out how did her mental disorder begin, and after that, certain moments in her life, when the mental disorder grew worse. Thus, we came to moment when she was hospitalized here, at Crystal Medical Center, in Dallas."

"Did she spend a lot of time here, in our clinic?"

"About six months, as far as I know. After that, she went through a period of improvement, when I met her. For months, I didn't even know that she was suffering from schizophrenia. I could talk to her about anything, she didn't show any sign that she would suffer from such a diagnosis. She looked perfectly normal to me. Before we got married she confessed that had been suffering from this mental disorder that she hoped would never occur again. She told me she had been hospitalized here, at the Crystal Medical Center. I wish I had asked her about other aspects concerning her hospitalization here. I should have asked her, doctor. But, after I hypnotized her, yesterday, and she went in temporal regression, I found out about some colleagues she had, in a Re-socialization Room. Do you have such a room?"

"Of course we have a Re-socialization Room. It is in this clinic, in the next building."

"Irene", I continued, "was the slave of her Voice. By hypnotic trance I tried to eliminate her Voice, but I was not successful. However, I still have a chance. I would like to find out some information, such as the names and addresses of some patients who were hospitalized here twenty years ago. Or to find out about what happened to them."

"Mrs. Cerin told you about these patients while she was in trance?" the doctor asked surprised.

"Yes, doctor."

"What exactly are you hoping to solve by getting information about these patients?"

"As I have told you, I couldn't destroy my wife's Voice. So I tried to destroy the other patients' Voices."

"And, did you succeed?" asked the doctor smiling rather inquiringly.

"That's what I want to find out. Should a single patient that was present in my wife's regression recovered, I have a chance to bring her to normality too."

"How?" asked the doctor, being curious.

"By taking that patient in hypnotic trance. He is known in my wife's regression as the owner of a Voice, but, in reality, he is not any more. His words will become a sort of law even for my wife's Voice, a law that will squeeze *Doubt* in her soul and, so,

recovery. It's a kind of experiment, doctor. What do you say about this idea of mine?"

"Frankly, Mr. Cerin, I don't believe in such a thing. I think it belongs to the fantasticalness, to the absurd. I don't want to discourage you, but my opinion is that you should go back home and leave the dark thoughts away and take some pills, which I can prescribe you right now", said the doctor who probably thought I was crazy. Anyway, I didn't care about what Kaufmann thought of me, I only wanted to carry out my plan.

"I probably need some smoothing medicines, doctor, but yet, please, help me with those old patients! Maybe you know something."

"I'll try, but what if you don't know any names? Secondly, twenty years is quite a long time and people can even forget things, Mr. Cerin!" said the doctor in a professional tone of voice, this time a tone that is typical for psychiatrists and a tone that I can't stand. It is a warm, fatherly, friendly and understanding voice, which I find so repugnant as its theatric accents are so poorly performed by all psychiatrists.

"All I can tell you from her temporal regression state is that she was describing me some colleagues from the Re-socialization Room, such as: the Sweetie, the Philosopher, the Chief of State, the Bishop, the Mother, the Princess. Do these names tell anything to you, doctor?"

He kept quite for a few minutes, staring at the ceiling, in a certain corner. I understood that Kaufmann was thinking that maybe it was time for me to find out the truth. One single name would have been enough, just one name, and everything Irene told me would have become true.

"There have been several Chiefs of State, Philosophers, Princesses, Bishops here at the Crystal", said Kaufmann, "but I don't remember any Bishop or Philosopher or Princess or any other character from twenty years ago."

"Try, doctor. Maybe you could ..." I insisted.

"I'm trying, Mr. Cerin, but I'm sure I can't remember anything."

"Do you think I won't have any chance?"

"I don't think so" the doctor answered in his professional tone.

I started to tremble. I couldn't imagine that my whole dream was crumbling away like a castle made of playing cards. I don't even remember how I left Dr. Kaufmann's office. I was so sad and dispirited that, after I stepped out from the clinic, I couldn't even walk to my own car. I sat on one of the benches from the alleys that surround Crystal Medical Center. I don't know how long I stayed there. One hour, two, three, it doesn't really matter. All I know is that I was trying to think of a way of finding out information about Irene's "colleagues". I was looking at a gardener who was working hard with the different sorts of plants that were decorating the alleys. When he arrived in front of me, I tried to talk to him.

"The sky is clear today, Mr. gardener."

"Yes, it is a fine day for gardening!"

"Have you been working as a gardener for a long time?"

"For almost forty years. I've been working for the Crystal for thirty years, since the center was founded."

"I believe you found out many stories of some patients here."

"I hear some things about what happens in the clinic."

"Do the patients usually recover? I know they are having some re-socialization classes in the Re-socialization Room."

"That's right. But some of them recover, others don't. It depends on the diagnosis and on how serious their mental disorder is."

"But have you heard of some spectacular cases, in which a seriously disordered patient recovered?" I asked him without hoping for a concrete answer, this time.

"There was a case, twenty years ago, of a professor from a university in Chicago.

They brought him here in Dallas, because his family was in Texas. He was not married."

"Didn't he call himself the Philosopher?"

"That's right! He called himself the Philosopher! I don't know whether he had any connections with the philosophy because he's one of the most famous doctors in the country, he teaches medicine at the University in Chicago.

This man stayed here about three years and he didn't even know his name and then, suddenly, he recovered. But anyway he didn't fully recover! I know these things about him because, at that time, they were talking in the clinic about the Philosopher, who became Dr. Parkins again. That's his name, Parkins. On those days when he recovered, a patient died, she was calling herself ..."

"The Princess!?"

"How do you know?" the gardener asked me, surprised.

"I think I've heard about the Princess."

"Poor girl", said the gardener, "she was waiting for her Prince. Suddenly she became very nervous, saying that the Prince had left her. She was suffering so much. She died of a stroke."

"Do you know anything about the Chief of State, the Bishop, the Sweetie, the Mother?"

"I don't, sir. There are many patients here. Some of them come, others leave or die and others stay. I don't know every patient. I only know some special cases that they are rumoring about in the clinic, from one stretcher bearer to another, from one nurse to another. I don't talk to the doctor about this stuff. The doctors don't have time to chat with me."

"I asked Dr. Kaufmann about the Philosopher today and he said he didn't remember anything."

"It's possible! Maybe Dr. Kaufmann was on leave those days, he would go to all kinds of conferences and meetings all over the world, not only in the United States. Kaufmann is a very good doctor."

"I thank you so much, sir", I told him and I rushed to my car.

"Why are you interested in all these?"

"I will explain this to you some other time! Thank you very much!" I cried loud from the distance.

I still don't find my words to express the joy the gardener has brought me. I got in the car and started off to Chicago. In the plane I thought about the beautiful Princess who waiting for her Prince in the Fate Tower. Poor Princess, she will always remain like a spot in my soul. I'm so sorry that she died. I would do anything to bring her back to life, but I know it is impossible.

Suddenly I passed from a state of euphoria, of exuberance, which was induced by such a success to a state of regret concerning the Princess' death. I realized that I had killed her, without my intention, by trying to save her.

I feel like a criminal who will have the victim on his conscience all his life. Is this the price paid for Irene's life? Only now I realize how big it is. Has the coming back to reality been so painful for the Princess?

Was she so happy in the Fate Tower, where she was waiting for her Prince, making envelopes? Have I destroyed her life by pulling down the tower that was keeping her as prisoner of Schizophrenia?

Was that tower her own life? I wonder which is my wife's own life? Is Irene truly happy as a slave of her Voice, as the Princess was? I'm so afraid that Irene might have a shock when she breaks up with her Voice. I'm not sure whether I'm doing the right thing. After all, Irene's life belongs to her and I want her alive, even if her soul is not in

my reality. At least I can go visit her from time to time, I can see her. The Princess' life didn't belong to me either. I wanted to save her and I killed her, which loathes me and makes me feel so guilty. Only now I understand how difficult it is to bear such a burden on your conscious, your whole life, and this is just the beginning of the hell that will follow. I'm sorry for the Princess' death. And all these just for bringing Irene back with us. And yet, I will fight to the end. I will have the courage. I won't give in. I cured a mentally disordered man the other day, who was twenty years ago. This tells me that I should go on fighting, that what I did is not entirely wrong. I can't wait to meet Professor Parkins. I'm going to look for him at the Faculty of Medicine in Chicago. I hope that he is there right now, and that he is not in some other city or just missing, God forbid! I couldn't wait for him one more day!

Once I got to the airport in Chicago, after a four hour flight, I took a taxi to the faculty of medicine, where I asked to see Professor Parkins. I learned that he was the dean of the faculty and that he was having a lecture to his students, and he would come back to his office in about twenty minutes. I cooled my heels in his waiting room, waiting for him as anxiously as I've never waited for anybody in my life. Parkins' secretary, a nice fair-haired woman, about thirty years old, with provocative breast and a very short skirt to go with them, asked me if I cared for a coffee. I said I did, trying to restrain my excitement. I knew that, in a few moments, a man whose life I had saved, in another transcendental mental level, killing another life at the same time, would make his appearance. A man who, in his turn, will be able to save my life. However hard I tried not to let my excitement show, when the secretary gave the coffee, my hand was shaking so hard that I stained my shirt with a few drops of coffee. The secretary asked me if I needed anything and assured me that the dean was a kind person and he would definitively help me. Until Parkins arrived, I got to ask his secretary what was his specialization. She answered me, being surprised at my question, as if it went without saying that everybody should know Parkins was a surgeon. Shortly after that, the door opened and Parkins in person appeared. When I saw him I was dumbfounded. I was looking at his as if I saw a statue, a famous painting, somewhere in an art museum. I couldn't believe I was standing in front of the Philosopher, now dean Parkins. He was about sixty-five years old, with white, short hair. So was his beard. He gave me an analytic look, scrutinizing me, I noticed he had green eyes. He was skinny, tall and a little hunch-backed.

"The gentleman came here all the way from Dallas and he would like to talk to you, Mr. Parkins."

"Yes, of course!" he answered. "Please, come into my office, sir!" I walked into a luxurious room, where there were two computers, ultra-modern furniture, and many pictures on the walls, representing the deans of this faculty, probably during the last century. All these granted the room an appearance of academic gravity. Only when I followed Parkins in his office I realized that I didn't even know how to explain that I wanted from him. There was no way I could tell him directly that I had come to hypnotize him in order to save my wife. I wanted to tell him indirectly, making him understand that what I had achieved. He might even feel embarrassed or offended if I remembered him of a past that he was definitively not trying to recall. He asked me to have a seat on one of the chairs next to a table on which there was a book. It was the Bible. Parkins sat next to me.

"My name is Sorin, Mr. Parkins, and ..."

"... you came from Dallas", he continued.

"Yes, Mr. Dean."

"Can I help you?" he asked me directly, looking at his watch.

"I don't know how to tell you this, Mr. Dean."

"Please, go straight to the subject, because in a quarter of an hour I have a lecture in a lecture room that is a little far from my office."

"I'll try to be as briefly as I can, Mr. Dean. But this is such a serious problem that I don't know how to explain it in just a few minutes."

"If it is so serious, then say it, Mr. Cerin."

"My wife, Mr. Dean, is suffering of schizophrenia."

"I'm a surgeon, you should talk to a psychiatrist with regard to this disease, Mr."

..."

"... Cerin! My name is Sorin Cerin!"

"Mr. Sorin Cerin" Parkins concluded.

"I know that I have to talk to a psychiatrist and not to a surgeon in this matter!"

"I'm in a hurry, sir, get to the point!"

"Crystal Medical Center in Dallas, does it sound familiar to you?"

Parkins scrutinized me with his eyes and said:

"No, sir, if that's what you want to know! Now you want to present me as crazy too in all those scandal newspapers of yours!? I'm not crazy, Mr. Sorin, and I would like you to get this into your head!" said the dean, while he was walking towards a huge desk on which there were the two computers. Reaching the desk he pushed a button, the door opened and the secretary came in.

"See the gentleman to the door!" the dean told her, pointing at me.

"But, Mr. Dean, I haven't finished yet!"

"I don't have time for you, sir. Please, go!"

The secretary came to me and said in a cold tone of voice:

"Sir, please, follow me!"

"But, I haven't ..."

"You can't stay in this office any longer."

"But, please!"

"If you won't leave this room, I'll call the security guard!"

"Very well, very well" I said, walking to the door.

"Please!" said the secretary.

I don't know what came to me all of a sudden, the moment I got to the door, to tell

Parkins:

"You should know, Philosopher, that the philosophy of the philosophies is the nothingness!"

On hearing these words, Parkins got up from the huge desk where he had sat and said:

"Say it again, Mr. ..."

"Cerin" I interrupted him.

"Cerin!? Cerin!? Cerin!?" he said almost whispering, as talking to himself, but loud enough for us to hear.

"The philosophy of the philosophies of the philosophies is the nothingness, Mr. Parkins!"

He was thinking, staring at one of the computers on the desk. After a short while, during which I stood in the door frame, the secretary found herself forced to ask him:

"What should we do, Mr. Dean? Shall I see the gentleman to the door or you still have some business with him?"

"Show him in" said Parkins starting as if the secretary had awakened him from a sound sleep. She signed me to come in the room again I had just left and closed the door behind me.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Sorin!"

"Call me Sorin, Mr. Parkins."

"Ok, Sorin! I'm sorry for the incident, but I thought that you were sent by some enemies of mine who wish to take my place. You realize it wouldn't be such a great thing if this news was made public that Mr. Parkins, a doctor who has a certain confirmation of his surgery talents, was some mad man, a raving mad man! A mad man who, for three years, didn't even know who he really was.

"How do you know that I'm not sent by one of your enemies, Mr. Parkins?"

"It is simple. You would have never told me what you just have. You are a strange man, Sorin! This time, I would like you to tell me everything in detail."

"Agreed, Mr. Parkins!"

"I'm listening, Sorin!"

"As I told you before, my wife is suffering of residual schizophrenia. Now she is permanently hospitalized in one of the mental hospitals in Florida, close to Miami."

"So that is what you mean! Please, go on!"

I started to tell him about my experience in the Tibetan lamasery, about the hypnotic trance state I had brought Irene to and, of course, about Irene's past, the Tower from the Mall, and how she was hospitalized at Crystal Medical Center. Then I told him about Irene's "colleagues" from the Re-socialization Room among which there was the Philosopher, which I knew for certain to be the present dean Parkins. In the end I reached that point in my story where I tried to help the Philosopher and the Princess recover. It is useless to describe Parkins' face!

"Knowing that I couldn't defeat Irene's Voice directly, I searched for other Voices whom I could have defeated a lot easier, Mr. Parkins."

"Why?"

"For the simple fact that I wasn't part of none of the other Voices' past!" I answered him.

"Why did you resort to these Voices?" the dean asked me.

"Because none of them were enemies of Irene's Voice. On the contrary, somewhere, in a hyperspace or transcendental space, call it how ever you want, the Voices have a kind of society of their own, forming a sort of communion. A Voice will always listen to another Voice which is on a somehow common space-time co-ordinate, than to an intruder from a strange space and time who wishes to exterminate them. It's odd, Mr. Parkins, but the Voices never annihilate one another even when they have totally different evolutions and manifestations, even when they get to the point where they fight one another. What I was able to observe being there for my wife while she was in the hypnotic trance state, was the fact that in that Re-socialization Room, although there were a variety of Voices, the Chief of State's Voice, the Philosopher's, the Hunter's, the Bishop's, the Sweetie's, the Mother's, the Princess' and the Lawyer's although they had such different personalities, they didn't annihilate one another but they formed a summum, if you like, a kind of commune Voice of the Re-socialization Room. No matter what the internal contradictions were, they were disappearing at the social level, dispersing in a universe somewhat exterior to the Voices, which was rendering a consensus note. I realized in this way that the most powerful weapon against the Voices was the doubt, which, after being sowed in their souls, would have germinated like a cancer that in the end would have destroyed the Voices."

"When did you sow the seeds of this doubt?" Parkins asked me curiously.

"Yesterday morning."

"Yesterday morning?" Parkins repeated.

"Yes, Mr. Dean! Yesterday morning, Irene went into a hypnotic trance and, on the basis of temporal regression, she went twenty years back in time, in the Re-socialization Room."

"And what doubt did you sow, sir?"

"I sowed the Princess the doubt that her Prince doesn't love her anymore because he is living with another woman with whom he betrays her."

"And to the Philosopher, Sorin?"

"I proved to the Philosopher why the philosophy of the philosophies is the nothingness and how he could fight the Voice which was terribly tormenting him."

"It's amazing, Sorin! I am the Philosopher! It's amazing!" he continued. "I owe you my recovery from twenty years ago through the yesterday hypnotic session! It's fantastic! You cured me from the future, twenty years before, in the past. I can't believe it and still it is true!"

"Yes, it is true, Mr. Parkins!"

"So you are that Sorin, The Lawyer's acquaintance!?"

"In flesh and blood, Mr. Parkins!"

"Extraordinary!" The dean was looking at me amazed as he couldn't believe it. "I simply can't express this amazement in words." The door opened and the secretary appeared.

"I've come to remind you, Mr. Dean, that you have a lecture now in the lecture room..."

"Forget it! Please let them know that all my lectures for today are being postponed!" cried the dean with a tone of voice that was rather guttural than cursive. On seeing the professor's face as red as a boiled lobster, the secretary asked him if he was feeling alright.

"I feel very well!"

"I'll announce the postponement of today's lectures." said the secretary.

"Maybe the gentleman would like a coffee or a juice, maybe he is hungry, he has done a long way ..." said Parkins, but I interrupted him:

"Don't worry. It's ok! I don't need anything for the moment." The secretary turned and closed the door slowly.

"So, Sorin, what else can I say except that I thank you so much for what you did for me yesterday, but twenty years ago. It's true! It seems impossible but is really true. What could I do for you?"

"That is precisely why I came to you!"

"I'm listening, Sorin, although I think I already know why you came to me!"

"Yes, I would like you to help me to sow doubt in Irene's Voice, to bring her back to reality." I said to the dean. He was thinking for a few moments, then he said:

"I agree to go into hypnotic trance state to help your wife who really needs this kind of intervention. This time, the Philosopher will be the one to save her, Sorin. The Philosopher who's Voice you succeeded to drive away through a theorization of the nothingness. Thank you very much, Sorin!"

"I told you that you can call me Sorin!"

"Ok, Sorin, if it pleases you! But I'm so amazed that maybe I wasn't even paying attention when you told me that before!"

"I would like to know what else do you know about the other"colleagues"?"

"I only know that the Princess suffered a mental shock and died. She had very much missed her Prince. I know from a doctor who retired about fifteen years ago that the Chief of State had been a military pilot in his real life. That fat, even obese Sweetie! I think she weighed almost one hundred and thirty kilos and I can't tell you what shock I had when I recovered and I realized who I was surrounded by! If before I used to see Sweetie as the goddess of the goddesses, after I stopped being the Philosopher I found her to be a repulsing hideousness. A real monster! The Bishop was a nice guy. That doctor, whom I told you that retired, told me about the Bishop, that he was a train mechanic before getting sick. The Princess had been a student and the Mother a shop

assistant."

"And the Hunter?"

"Oh, yes, the poor Hunter! He was so tormented by his Voice!"

"Yes, he was always chasing Chimeras and not hyenas." I said.

"Exactly! He was always in search of Chimeras and not hyenas. For all I found out from that same doctor, the Hunter was the one who achieved most in his private life. He had been a Minster. I don't recall very well what ministry he ran. It's been so long."

"Do you happen to know what has happened to these people since then?"

"I don't know what has become of them after that! I left Crystal Medical Center and, to be honest, I didn't really feel the urge to go back to that medical center. The memories weren't the most pleasant anyway and I don't want to ever remember them again."

"So, Mr. Parkins, you agree to be hypnotized by me and to help me in respect to my wife?"

"Arnold Parkins! You can call me Arnold. I insist!" he said smiling at me.

"Ok, Arnold!" I said.

"I agree! We can do it right here in my office. Does it take very long?"

"No, not at all! Half an hour at the most. I don't think we need more than that."

The dean pushed the button calling his secretary who appeared in the door case and said:

"What could I do for you, professor?"

"Please, let no one disturb us for an hour! During this period, no one may come in here!"

"I understood!" said the secretary and she left, again closing slowly the door behind her.

"So, Sorin, we can start!"

"Yes, I would be really glad to." I said, feeling that the dean's office was shaking for a moment. I was dizzy. For two days, almost three, I had wandered about, I had experienced so many emotions.

I was so tired. Something, an interior force, was telling me to hold on as these moments were crucial in my life. In spite of all that, a dilemma got hold of me at the last minute. Namely: I can't send Parkins in the past, at the Re-socialization Room, because Irene's future until yesterday was sealed, in the sense that yesterday Irene was seriously ill. And as yesterday she was seriously ill, I couldn't have cured her twenty years ago so that, in the future, she would be ill again. In exchange, she had only met the Philosopher in the Re-socialization Room and a hypnotic trance on the Philosopher would be a time regression of twenty years, in the Re-socialization Room, the only thing which can connect with the Lawyer.

I will have to ask him to make a present hypnotic-telepathic connection with the Lawyer subject, which I don't know if he would be able to. I don't think that any other temporal regression would be possible, even with a day before, as the Philosopher has never seen the sanatorium room where Irene is today. In spite of all that, a certain answer, credible to some extent, which might function in the given conditions, started to spring up in my mind. What was it about? It was possible that the Philosopher subject might get in contact with Irene subject as entities and not as environment, or frame. To be more explicit, the two fettered souls along with their Voices have had a tangency somewhere in the past. The frame of the Re-socialization Room, where they met and dialogued in the past does not matter for them. Probably what matters for them is the dialogue in itself, the communication which can also be performed in the present, especially when I'm sure that that Re-socialization Room had a different connotation

for each one of them, depending on the way the disease too had a certain Voice of its own. So I decided to start the hypnosis session with Mr. Parkins.

I asked him to sit on that big black-leathered couch placed in a corner of his office.

I sat next to him and I asked him to look me in the eyes. Then:

"This time you are as calm as you could be. You have to leave aside any kind of thought. Can you feel the silence surrounding you?"

"Yes."

"Your eyelids are growing heavier and heavier ..."

"Yes, my eyelids are growing heavy."

"There's only silence all around you, a universe of silence, of calm. Your eyelids are growing even heavier."

"Yes."

"Now, as I'll slowly count to three, the silence will be complete, and you'll have no more thoughts, you'll just step into a very pleasant, wonderful world."

"Yes," said Arnold, the ex-Philosopher, hardly audible.

"I'm starting counting, Arnold. One ... two ... three ... Arnold, can you tell me where you are?"

He started talking seriously and jerky, just like persons in the hypnosis. The same had happened in my dialogues with Irene and of course, with her present alter ego, her Voice.

"I'm somewhere in Latin America, in the past, there's Teotihuacán pyramid. The sun is shining, lighting up the sumptuous settlement in a warm sunlight. I see a lot of people around who want to pray to the gods. I feel how saint this town is ... I would never want to leave it! I feel so good!"

"What exactly are you feeling, Arnold?"

"A kind of beatitude."

"Do you know why you are there?"

"To contemplate the beauty of this holy town."

"Maybe that, too ..."

"Why?"

"Does Irene or the Lawyer sound familiar to you, Arnold?" I asked him in a whisper so that I won't cause him a shock by leading him from one reality to another in such a short time. As a matter of fact, as part of these techniques, the one who "controls" the hypnotic trance, so to say, in other words, the hypnotist will always have to speak to his patient as calmly and as serene as he can, which in a certain measure will avoid possible accidents.

"The Lawyer?" Arnold said slowly.

"Yes, Arnold, The Lawyer you met twenty years ago in the Re-socialization Room at Crystal Medical Center in Dallas."

"Yes, I remember The Lawyer."

"How was The Lawyer like?" I asked him, trying to get him very well accustomed with the mission for which we were doing the hypnosis.

"She was a tall, slim, brown-haired girl with blue eyes. She was a good-looking girl."

"Do you remember why she was in the Re-socialization Room?"

"She was sick, the poor woman!"

"What sickness did she have, Arnold?"

"A serious mental disease, she was delirious all the time."

"Who else was beside her when she was delirious?"

"Her Voice," he answered, which made me very glad as he himself had reached the conclusion that Irene's Voice existed.

"Was the Voice commanding The Lawyer?"

"Yes, actually the Voice was the one commanding her."

"Why do you think the Voice was commanding The Lawyer, Arnold?"

"Because, if the Voice had left her she wouldn't have been a Lawyer any longer, but a lawyer."

"Is it true, Arnold, that there is a big difference between Lawyer, as a name and lawyer, as a job?"

"Yes, it is."

"When did you realize that, Arnold?"

"When I recovered."

"Where were you when you recovered?"

"In the Re-socialization Room."

"And why did you recover?"

"I found out!"

"And what did you find out?"

"Sorin helped me."

"Do you know who Sorin is?"

"Sorin is The Lawyer's husband."

"Do you know what is the Lawyer's name?"

"Irene."

"Irene." I confirmed.

"Irene." Arnold repeated.

"Arnold, now I would like to ask you something, may I?"

"Ask me!"

"I would like you never to tell either Irene or her Voice that I'm behind you. Everything must seem as natural as if you were alone and you had never heard of me. Do we agree?"

"Yes!"

"There would be one more thing. As you well know, you will be there to help Irene escape from the detestable Voice, which is Schizophrenia, her mental disease. You are there so that Irene would remain Irene and not the Lawyer."

"I see ... I know why I'm here."

"Why?" I made him say it again to be sure that he understood and that this experiment will not fail.

"To chase Irene's Voice away, so that Irene will not be the Lawyer any longer, but a lawyer."

"Exactly, dear Arnold! Now you will have to find Irene. You will have to meet her and tell her what I will be telling you, saying that all those things are coming from you and not from me."

"Understood!"

"Now, please, search Irene! Are you with her?"

"No, Sorin!"

"Why?"

"Because a sort of black haze surrounds me every time I try to find her. I have the same sensation one has when he is searching something on the computer and he doesn't know the code."

"Let's keep trying, Arnold, please!"

"It's very hard, the black haze is turning into a kind of whirlpool."

"What color is the whirlpool?"

"I don't know if it has a color. I just feel it like a whirlpool and that's it."

"I ask you again, make a strong mental suggestion, with no shadow of a doubt, that

you are next to Irene."

"What am I seeing, Sorin! Maybe you wouldn't like to know!"

"What are you seeing, Arnold?" I asked him really concerned.

"There is a curtain of fire in front of me bursting out of nowhere. Behind it there is Irene, with her face and head swollen and stained with blood."

I thought to myself at that moment that maybe really Irene is in danger, but I couldn't imagine that she could be physically attacked in the sanatorium she was in, especially that she lived in a private side-room, which there was no point thinking how much I was paying for every month.

For the moment I couldn't know what was the meaning of these visions. Maybe Schizophrenia had taken precaution measures in case it would have been attacked at a mental level? But then why didn't Irene have these visions when she facilitated the transmission of my thoughts to The Philosopher or to The Princess?

Maybe everything was happening in the past, in such a remote past that nobody was interested in it anymore, not even Schizophrenia.

Maybe it is much more complicated as far as the present is concerned. Maybe for one to be able to save a soul stolen by the disease, he must overcome some obstacles that are placed there to discourage him. I understand now that Schizophrenia itself uses some codes, as difficult as possible, so that the latticed doors of the disease could never be opened. I seemed to hear in those moments the words of the enlightened Lama: "It needs courage, patience and perseverance. It's up to you if you'll win or lose a war as, no matter how strange this may seem, it is not the power and the physical force who wins a war, but the wisdom, the courage, the will and above all the hope that what you are doing is well-done, but what you are doing should also be well-done."

"Is there still that shield of flames that separates you from Irene, Arnold?"

"Yes! Now it is so strong that all I see is the blaze that menacingly tries to surround me, too."

"Very good, Arnold, if the enemy is fire we are water, we are the Ocean of Life, Arnold and we have come to put out the fire in order to give life back what it has been stolen from her. Arnold, you are more and more nervous."

"What is happening, Arnold?"

"A huge wave is coming towards me. I'm a shipwrecked somewhere in the ocean. I keep swimming but my powers are exhausted. Please, save me! All around me is water and only water! Water, water! I'm thirsty!"

"Then we are the air the Being is breathing to live!"

"Help! Heelp! Sorin! I'm falling through the air from a huge height! I don't even have a parachute. I shall die!"

Arnold had become extremely agitated and started foaming at the mouth. I started thinking for the moment, what it will be if I brought him back from the hypnotic trance. An invisible voice seemed to tell me: just one more second! During this time I told Arnold:

"We are the desire, the hope, the will!"

Suddenly, he calmed down as if nothing had happened. I asked him right away:

"Are you alright Arnold?"

"Yes."

"Can you tell me where you are?"

"In a place full of hope, of desire and of will. Everything is vague. I just have the pleasant feeling that I'm full of a vague hope, a vague desire and a vague will."

"Could you have the hope, the desire and the will to see the Lawyer? To be with her in a room?" I asked the dean.

"Yes!"

"This time concentrate to be with the Lawyer and not with the lawyer or with Irene. Yes?"

"Yes!"

"So neither Irene nor the lawyer exists for you! Only the Lawyer does!"

"I understood!"

"Now you are with the Lawyer who was twenty years ago in the Re-socialization Room. Where are you Arnold?"

"Yes, I see the Lawyer! She's in a room. She's alone. She's sitting on a chair beside a table, with her face turned to the window. She is looking at the light flooding the room. The sun beams penetrate between the white-painted bars."

"Extraordinary, Arnold! That's right!" This time I was extremely happy because I had surpassed another stage, or better said, I had made an intelligent move in the true chess play I was playing with Irene's Voice as my adversary.

What I know for sure is that hypnosis, the hypnotic trance, is not only working for the temporal regression depending on a certain frame in which the two subjects have met, but, as I expected, is first of all working depending on the entities that have come in contact with one another. This time the Philosopher is the one visiting the Lawyer in a hypnotic telepathic trance, and not Arnold, Mr. Parkins.

Because at the present level I can only call Parkins a medium. It's only now that I also realize another mistake I made at the beginning, by sending Arnold to look for Irene, a person who doesn't exist in this reality any longer, and so all the data that lead to her are stopped by a psychological originated power, as if they were some computer data filed under a secret code. Would this code be useful to me at a certain point to help me cure Irene?

Could it be that my plan to sow the doubt is not enough? Which are the coordinates of this code? Are they Desire, Hope and Will? Which are the stages one passes to get to it? Are they Fire, Water and Air? The very primordial elements of this existence. Irene is locked under this code, where she is imprisoned by Schizophrenia. But the Lawyer is not! She is quasi present in this existence as an uncontrollable supporter of the Voice. Does the Lawyer have anything from Irene or the Voice itself is bi-personal? By having multiple personalities of Voice and Lawyer. Exactly like two magnetic poles, which, if they hadn't existed, our existence wouldn't have been possible either.

That's right. And the elementary particles, the mesons, the hyperons, the photons, the tachyons, the neutrons, the electrons, with their positive, negative or neutral charge, are subjected to the electromagnetism laws. What can Irene's Voice have in commune with quantum physics? Anyway, in this kind of situations any information, as uninteresting as it may be, could be useful. First of all, it was great that Arnold was in a trance state in Irene's room.

"Try to communicate with her, Arnold! For example, ask her to help you with a succession trial."

"I'm trying, Sorin!"

"What is the Lawyer saying?" I asked him again.

"I asked her three times but she is not answering."

"Then tell her that you are the Philosopher from the Re-socialization Room and that you need her services in a civil succession trial."

"It is only now that the Lawyer turns to me."

"What is she telling you, Arnold?"

"She is not telling me anything."

"You have to make her communicate with you, Arnold!"

"How should I do that, Sorin?"

"Don't call me anymore! I mean don't say my name. Her Voice might intercept your thoughts in one way or another. Please, listen! Tell her that you've come to expound one of your opinions regarding a philosophical theory."

"I've told her that."

"Isn't she answering?"

"No."

"Then, Arnold, tell her the following words: 'The philosophy of the philosophers is the nothingness. For that and not as part of it, there is God, the Great Creator of the Universe, differing from the Nothingness.'"

"She said: 'Philosopher?'"

Through Arnold, the connection with Irene was finally restored, although he was addressing to the Lawyer.

"Tell her you would need her help with a succession trial."

"The Lawyer says: 'Philosopher, what kind of succession? Can you succeed a Woman-Philosopher or another Philosopher? Can you succeed an entire Philosophy? Do you have the courage for that?'"

"Tell her yes, you have the courage to do that."

"I answered her exactly as you said."

"And what is the Lawyer telling you?"

"She is asking me: 'Tell me, Philosopher, what exactly succeeds a philosophy? A purer reason? The science? The Knowledge? Don't you give me these, Philosopher, because I'll have to defend you in a succession trial where the instance will surely ask me what exactly succeeds your Philosophy. What should I answer it, Philosopher?'"

"What should she?" Arnold asked me.

"Tell her that Reality succeeds your Philosophy."

"After I told her that the Lawyer said: 'Reality, Philosopher? You mean Reality succeeds the Nothingness? You make me laugh, Philosopher! Which Reality? The one of the dragons and immortal fairy tales? Tell me, which one of these realities is it?' Which one? Arnold asked me again.

"The Reality of the Illusion."

"The Reality of the Illusion." Arnold repeated, and then he went on. "The Lawyer is telling me ..."

"What is she telling you?"

"How horrible, how strange! The Nothingness creates the Reality of the Illusion in a succession trial. How come the Illusion doesn't create the Reality?" said Irene.

"How come?" Arnold asked me.

"Tell her, Arnold, that the Illusion of the Reality is the same thing with the Reality of the Illusion, only that it feels different each time. Everything is Illusion. In the Reality of the Illusion we emphasize the Illusion which exists as something real and in the Illusion of the Reality we concentrate more on the concept of illusory reality where the reality in itself is inexistent. Through the succession of these two concepts we get to the Illusion, either we want it or not. The only Reality is the Illusion. So?"

"The Lawyer is asking me if her voice is also an Illusion?"

"Tell her, my dear Arnold, that Life itself is also an Illusion."

"The Lawyer is telling me again: '...that is why the Philosophy of the philosophers is nothingness? But what about my Voice? My Voice tells me that it is the only reality in the Universe!'"

"Tell her, Arnold, that no one else but her can answer that question. All you want is her help in an important succession trial, a Trial that may become the most important one of her life."

"The Lawyer is asking me what do I really want from this whole list of

successions? Who am I really inheriting?" Torrents of sweat were dripping on Arnold's forehead.

"Tell her that, in your position as great Philosopher you inherit not only the Philosopher but also the Woman-Philosopher, so you inherit the philosophers' philosophy, which is the Nothingness. You want the succession documents to be drawn up for you for this Nothingness with all its annexes, including the Reality of the Illusion and the Illusion of the Reality; you want everything, absolutely everything connected to it. This is what you want from the succession trial."

"I told her" Arnold said.

"Very good, Arnold!"

"And still, Sorin, the Lawyer is asking me whether I am the only heir or I have other brothers and sisters?"

"Tell her you are the only rightful heir as long as you are the only child and you don't even have close relatives."

"The Lawyer told me that in such case I have all the chances to win the succession trial regarding the Philosophy of the philosophers, which is the Nothingness and to receive not only the Reality of the Illusion, but also the Illusion of the Reality, as constituent parts, annexes, of the Philosophy of the philosophers. The Lawyer explains me that these annexes are for the Philosophy of the philosophers, what a backyard, a garden, a garage are for a house."

"Tell her you agree."

"The Lawyer is asking me about fixing a date for the trial. What should I tell her?"

"Tell her that you agree on any possible date. The sooner the better, as you wish to enter in the possession of your inheritance"

"The Lawyer is fixing a date ..."

"Arnold, don't let her fix a date! Tell her that you want to be in the Court Room this very moment and that she should give the verdict regarding the Philosophy of the philosophers, the Nothingness, the Reality of the Illusion, and the Illusion of the Reality, as soon as possible and without any delay."

"The Lawyer told me that she agreed and that she would like to settle a fee."

"A fee?" I asked surprised.

"Yes."

In that moment, an idea about the fee came to me, so I told The Philosopher:

"Ask The Lawyer: does she love her Voice?"

"She answered me she loves it more than anything on the world!"

"If that's so tell her that if this succession trial is a success, the most beautiful gift for her voice will be one of the annexes of the basic inheritance, the Reality of the Illusion and the Illusion of the Reality. Once these annexes will be won, one of them will be donated to the Lawyer's Voice for ever."

"The Lawyer told me that her Voice is also pleased to receive such a magnificent gift from the Philosopher. Her Voice will be grateful to the Philosopher for as long as she lives. She never thought that, during this lifetime, someone would make her such a great gift. The Lawyer tells me that the Voice is extremely happy."

Once Arnold said all these, I told her to start the trial at once.

"The Lawyer tells me we are in the Court Room, in front of the Instance where we have to stand up because it's our succession trial's turn."

"That's perfect, Arnold, wonderful!"

"The Lawyer tells me that the Judge is now delivering his speech and he is saying:

"The instance is in court. Let's hear the Lawyer's opening statement. Honorable Court of the Laws of the Universe.

Today we have on the roll the Philosopher's succession trial, he being the only

child of his natural parents, the Philosopher and the Woman-Philosopher, who have the possession upon the following estate and its annexes. This estate is the philosophy of the philosophers, which is the Nothingness, with its two annexes, the Illusion of the Reality and the Reality of the Illusion, which we would like to become the propriety of the only successor, the Philosopher. The Lawyer says that the Judge is asking whether there is anything else to add."

"There is! Tell the Lawyer that you want one of the two annexes, that is, the Illusion of the Reality to belong to her Voice for the rest of the Lawyer's life. And this as a gift, or better said, as payment of the fee you owe her for the succession trial."

"I told that to the Lawyer. She is just explaining to the Judge what I've offered her.

He is saying: "the High Court of the Destiny has decided that the whole fortune, represented by the Philosophy of the Philosophers, which is the Nothingness, as well as the Reality of the Illusion, should belong to the Philosopher, as the only rightful heir of the Philosopher and of the Woman-Philosopher. The Illusion of the Reality should belong to the Lawyer's Voice who will be able to live in her inheritance as well as the Philosopher will live in his." It was only now that the Lawyer's Voice started shouting: "It's a trap!!! It's a trap!!! It's a trap!!! I don't want the Illusion of the Reality!!! No! I want the other one! I want the Reality of the Illusion! I want my illusion to be real and not my reality to be illusory! I was betrayed! Help! Help! Help!!!" The Judge shouted that he wanted silence in the room.

We were interrupted by the door of the dean's office being opened and the secretary who had been told not to disturb us, came in.

"Mr. Dean, The Minister of Education has called you for **three** o'clock ... **three** o'clock ... **three** ..." said the secretary staring at me stupefied as I was watching the professor who was in the trance state. Oh, dear! The professor got sick? Should I bring some water?"

"Please, get out at once!" I told the rude secretary.

"**Three, three.**" Arnold repeated. "The Judge said three."

"**Three** what?"

"I don't know for sure. It's a real chaos in here."

The secretary stepped in at one time, threatening me that she would call the security if I didn't tell her what was happening to her dean. I told her that he was hypnotized and he was in a trance state. By no means would she leave the office, so I had to bring Arnold back to the reality. It took him another twenty-five seconds to wake up. He was like a man who was just waking up from a long sleep. Seeing him coming back to his senses, the secretary calmed down. Actually, the experiment was mostly over. I haven't told Mr. Parkins about the incident with the secretary, as he probably was about to hear it from her own mouth, a few minutes after I leave.

Once more I was under the impression that human stupidity has no limits. So that Mr. Parkins' secretary would be a famous navigator, explorer, on the oceans of stupidity, where I think she would always discover without any difficulty new, vast territories of pure stupidity. Or, if only a drop of water stood for an Everest of stupidity, then this secretary would surely be an ocean. When I left Parkins, he would have wanted to come with me to Miami to pay Irene a visit, but I preferred to be alone. I don't know why. I've always been a sociable person and I even hated loneliness. But not this time. I felt loneliness like something that belonged only to me. A sort of primary selfishness so that I would have wanted every moment to belong to me and me alone. I wouldn't have wanted it to be stolen from me by a thief of moments. I was sure I would find Irene healthy. Maybe I wouldn't have wanted to share this moment with anyone else in the world. I would have felt any intruder like someone who would have made an attempt on our own privacy. So, on a heavy, American winter snowfall, I took

a taxi back to the Chicago airport. Since the plane that was supposed to take me to Miami was due to take off in an hour, I entered a little bar on the first floor and I ordered a Budweiser, trying to enjoy my victory not only in the metaphorical sense of the word but in the proper one, as well. This time I was convinced of my success. I knew that nothing and nobody could be against our wish to be together forever. It was then that I also decided to buy Irene a huge bunch of roses, her favorite flowers, the moment I got to Miami. The time left until the plane was due to take off seemed to me like a painful eternity.

How many eternities does a man live during his lifetime? Aren't there so many who passionately wish for the eternity, who would be ready to sell anything, even themselves, to get it, and who don't know that eternity is inside them, and that in this miserable life we live so many eternities? Is it that those people don't sell their own eternities when they sell themselves? Eternity is only inside of us, inside each one of us. As well as space and time. They don't exist outside our Illusion, which is the soul with his senses and perceptions. The Substance doesn't exist and has never existed, it's only an illusion; its existence is given by our souls. Even if what I say is sad, the stars, the galaxies, the comets don't exist in reality either. They are a dream we keep dreaming from the day we are born until the day we die. A dream, a simple dream and nothing more! The Infinite is inside of us. Beauty and all we know about the Universe it's also inside of us. The Universe inside of us, inside each one of us, so that every being has its own universe. The cause of the human being alienation is that, in his aspirations, in his hopes and in his feelings, the human being is searching for them outside and not inside of him. Which is even worse, even the liberty concept is being exteriorized by the human being, which leads to alienation and absurd. The millenary human aspiration to reach the stars is, in fact, the millenary Alienation of man to reach the Absurd. The more man will search for himself in the outside, the more he will destruct himself. The Great Rediscovery of Oneself will start when the human being will really understand that even the stars, no matter how far away they might seem, live in his soul. Some will start questioning how the spaceships that reached the Moon and traveled such a great distance, at such a great speed, were inside of us? In this dream, the distance, the space and the speed are also inside of us. The Conscience of each one of us is the individual dream of each one of us and more dreams, even if they are similar in terms of culture, society, civilization, give birth to the social conscience.

From the table I was at I could look outside. I watched a plane that had just taken off disappearing in the clouds that were placing their frozen tears upon his wings. Shortly after, it disappeared in the clouds, in the heart of the tears. At that moment, if I had wings, I would have flied, too. In a short while, that seems so long to me, I will find the result in Miami. Actually, it was the result of my life. It will confirm even my own destiny. I was sure I would find Irene healthy and throwing away her Voice at the dustbin of the past. I imagined how we would hold one another, how she would tell me about the awful nightmare she passed through, while I would be kissing her temples. I couldn't wait any longer. There have been so many years since this despicable disease had stolen her from my life, from my dream, offering her a pseudo-life, a pseudodream. I was thinking at the moment she would leave the convalescence home, when I would fly with her to New York, when will get home and the first thing I would do would be to take her in my arms and make love to her, just like that "out of the blue" like she used to say. Will she really be the same woman, the same loving mother she had been until the moment the disease got entirely hold of her? Will she be marked by the age this time? I'm sure the age is no impediment. I know people in their seventies that are younger than most seventeen year old kids. The biological age does never describe the psychical age, although both are just elements of this dream we call life

and which I feel I love at this moment, on the airport in Chicago. Maybe I wished I lived more lives, more dreams. I was looking at my watch almost every minute now. I felt the urge to smash its face, to move its hands a few hours forward when I will surely be with Irene. As far as patience was concerned, this was maybe the most difficult moment of my life because my patience was put at hard trial. I'm thinking about making Irene a surprise after a few days of adapting to New York; she never knew her father because she had never found out his address. I remember that years ago she used to tell me that she would like to see him at least once in her life. She always used to tell me that her mother made fun of her in her childhood and her teen-age years. She was a cold woman who used to find Irene guilty for all her troubles and un-fulfillments. Irene never understood why did she have her, why did she take her with her? Did she do it only in order to torment her? I'm sure that her mother's behavior also led to the appearance of this miserable disease: Schizophrenia. Although she never knew her father, Irene was convinced that he was a good man who wouldn't have left her mother if it hadn't been for some of her "defects" which she always refused to talk to me about. I accidentally found out her father's address through a friend who works in the telecommunication business, the same business Irene's father used to work in before he retired. This happened a month ago and I haven't had the time to go Philadelphia, where he lives, although I wanted very much to meet him, maybe as much as Irene did, and to remember the times when Irene was a baby! Although so many years have past since we have been separated, I fell like I love her more than ever. I remember how Irene used to tell me how her mother used to say bad things about her father when she was a child and then a teenager. Although she didn't know him, she felt a great love for him. What she knew about her father was that he used to bathe her when she was just a few weeks old. She had no picture of her father, she didn't even know how he looked like and yet she felt that she loved him and that her life wouldn't be complete until the day she would meet her father. The more she loved her father, the more she hated her mother. She was sure that her father hasn't been beside her because of her mother's "defects". It's only now that I realize I have drunk three Budweiser beers and I have started to get dizzy. I don't know why, but I feel the need to be dizzy. *The euphoria that the alcohol produces on me is beneficial at this moment since too much happiness is as painful as too much misery and that because all contrasts meet and combine somewhere in the extreme. Any excess causes pain. It doesn't matter if it's an excess of too much good or an excess of too much evil, pain is still pain.* Finally, the time has passed and we are to enplane for the take off. Once I was in the plain, I asked to the flight attendant for some Budweiser beer. She only had Heineken. So I drank so much Heineken beer that the moment I set foot in Miami, which I had left only two days before, I felt really dizzy. The night had fallen and the sky here was clear, illuminated by a multitude of stars reflected in the water of the ocean which I saw through the round window of the plain, as in Miami we landed on an airport which had the landing and departure run ways limited on both sides by the Atlantic Ocean, so that on the moment of the landing I had the strange sensation of an alight on the sea. Of course I took a taxi and I stopped at the first flower shop I met on the way that was still opened at eleven o'clock in the night. I remember what a huge bunch of roses I bought for Irene. I want to remind you by all means that roses are her favorite flowers. By being her favorite flowers they have become my favorite flowers, too, so I began loving roses just as much as Irene.

Chapter 11

Finally here I was at the convalescence home, standing between the walls where my wife, Irene, was. The security men didn't even want to hear about letting me in as the visit hours were until seven p.m at the latest. This time I was also lucky and this time because I had my mobile phone with me, which I had accidentally forgotten in one of my coat pockets, although its battery was almost completely discharged. I think I hadn't recharged it for like five days.

I knew I had in the memory of my mobile doctor Morrison's phone number, the doctor who was watching after Irene. I said watching after and not treating because to administrate a treatment to a sick person who was in such a serious condition as Irene was, does not also mean to treat this disease, but on the contrary, the disease continues to grind the soul it took in its empire, as cliffs are weathered by the waves. I dialed the number and Morrison himself answered from the loudspeaker of the phone.

"Hello?"

"Hello, yes!" Morrison said

"Doctor, I'm patient Cerin's husband."

"It's nice to hear you, Mr. Cerin." Morrison answered with a bored tone of voice.

"I wanted to tell you that I'm at the gate of the convalescence home and I would like to see my wife."

"What, haven't you left for New York?"

"Yes I have, I drove ten hours to New York, then I flew to Dallas, I took the plain again to Chicago and here I am landing an hour ago in Miami."

"You had quite a stroll, Mr. Cerin!"

"That's true, Mr. Morrison!"

"What's the reason for traveling thousands of kilometers in such a short time?"

"What's the reason? What do you mean what's the reason? My wife is the reason!"

I've tried some unconventional experiments with her. Maybe this will help her recover."

"Mr. Cerin, it's great that you love your wife so much.

But, as a psychiatrist, I can tell you not to put your hopes too high as regards your wife's recovery, because the chances for this to happen are almost inexistent.

I believe the best thing you could do would be to get used to this one day and, why not, to try to rebuild your life."

I was there, convinced that as a result of my experiments Irene was cured and that right now she was in state of total anxiety not knowing what was happening to her, how she got there and Doctor Morrison was advising me to rebuild my life. That moment I really felt I was going crazy.

I felt like swearing him, fighting the guards, breaking the door open, but I remembered again the enlightened Lama who used to tell me to have patience, not to swear, not to think negatively, because any bad thought turns against me. So I answered Morrison with a diplomacy not even I believed I was capable of:

"That is true, doctor! I think you are perfectly right about my behavior concerning my wife. Maybe it would be better for me to start my life again with another woman. But since I got here tonight, I don't want to wait at the convalescence home gate until morning, when I know for sure that there is neither day nor night for my wife. That's why I ask you Dr. Morrison to allow me to visit my wife tonight. Believe me, I would

be most grateful to you."

I told Morrison all this while I was feeling like seizing him by the throat and hitting him in the head with that huge bunch of roses which I could barely hold in my arms while I was talking on the phone.

"Just wait a few minutes while I call the security and ask them to let you in"

Morrison said on a professional calm and amiable tone, that is, a psychiatrist tone.

"Very well, doctor. Thank you!" and then I hanged up. Judging by the tone he spoke to me in, this Morrison scoundrel even had the impertinence to consider me insane. I was about to wait again just a few minutes. A few minutes that lasted an eternity. In the end, a fat guy, a kind of chief of security made me a sign meaning that I was free to enter the madhouse's gate. I knew that Irene was behind those walls and that this time she was cured. What would she be thinking right this moment when I was walking towards her on those endless hallways on which two days ago I had passed along having Mark beside me? The heavy metal, white-painted, eye-holed door opened and Irene appeared in front of me. She was on a mattress in a sitting position. Once I entered the room I sat on a chair in front of her. I was waiting quite out for her to stop contemplating the floor and look up. Maybe she is confused since she recovered, maybe she has a sort of amnesia of the past, since the disease has stolen her completely and maybe she doesn't understand why she is there. I felt like holding her tight. I felt like never letting her go of my arms. Not even now can I understand why didn't I simply hold her. In the end I said, almost whispering:

"Irene ... Irene, it's me, Sorin!"

She was sitting on the mattress, depressed, as if she were alone in the room. Then I decided to speak louder:

"I came back, my dear Irene! It's your husband, Sorin!"

I would have expected her to jump into my arms, to be glad that I was there.

Instead, she looked up, and without saying a word, she fixed upon me those eyes that had contemplated the floor. I was holding the roses tightly in my hand. She had the same strange, lost look I have seen in her sickness period. It wasn't her look. However, I couldn't believe that Irene hasn't recovered. I was sure it was a game, a joke and a nightmare that would pass once with the brake of day. Irene had to be healthy, she had to be the one I once met in a greyhound carelessly driving through the American winter. It couldn't be, the one in front of me wasn't Irene! It must have been someone else in front of me and not Irene. Maybe it was. I don't know why in that moment I felt like calling the security and tell them that they have mistaken the room and that actually Irene was in an other side-room. After a few moments she looked at me and answered: "Sir, what problem brings you to me uninvited?" she addressed me all that in the most repulsive tone of voice.

"Irene, what do you mean what problem?" I answered her felling how my whole body started shaking.

Irene looked at me just as cold as before and then looked at the roses and said:

"Don't you think mister that, with these repugnant flowers, you can bribe me to betray my client at the trial!"

"Irene?" I repeated, accepting that everything was a bad joke.

"Are you making fun of me, mister? I'm not Irene, I'm the Lawyer! The Lawyer!!!"

She spelled the word as if she had wanted me to understand it better.

"Is this a joke, Irene?" I asked her because I couldn't believe it. I have put so much hope in this miraculous healing. It can't be! A failure would destroy me! Irene has to be cured. She must be kidding! I expect her to jump from that mattress into my arms every moment now and to kiss me, to enjoy the roses. Yes, the roses which were her beloved flowers.

"But Irene loves roses very much!" I said in a total confusion.

"I don't know which Irene loves these miserable flowers, but I don't. After all, why am I wasting my time on you? Please, leave!" she said while looking hostilely at me.

In that moment I understood: Irene hasn't recovered. No matter how much she would have tried to joke with me, she couldn't have looked at me hostilely. I knew it was true but still I couldn't accept the reality.

I was thinking again that everything was a nightmare that would pass once with the break of day. I was still holding tightly in my arms the huge bunch of roses that I had bought for her so full of hope, from the flower shop, which seemed to be waiting for me. Although the flower shop lady should have left home an hour earlier, she didn't. Why? I didn't know and she didn't either! Until now I was firmly convinced that she didn't leave home because she was waiting for me, who was coming in a hurry from the airport to buy Irene a huge bunch of roses. Now I'm not at all convinced that the flower shop lady was waiting for me. She must have been waiting for someone else. I should have been that Someone else and not Me. It would be so nice if I were someone else right now, that person full of exuberance that the flower shop lady was waiting for, that person for which even the stars seemed to shine in the waters of the Atlantic Ocean, that person who left a fifty-dollar tip for a bunch of roses. Oh, my dear God, how much I wish to be someone else in these moments, not to see Irene looking hostilely at me, not to hear her spelling The Law-yer, for my better understanding. I felt like I got lost in an existence that was not my own, like the future, the past and the present were some notions I've never understood. I felt like eternity didn't exist and had never existed, and this was something I would have never wished for. I was longing to be Someone else for whom there were more eternities in every soul, so many eternities that they were putting your patience to trial because you couldn't count them.

Only now did I understand how wonderful life was when your patience was being taxed, when you knew there was a dead line that you were expecting body and soul. Only then does one realize that the dream of our life has so many eternities. Now when I don't have a dead line, when I have nothing to wait for, when Irene is sick beside me and I know very well that she will never get better, now I don't need patience any longer as there is no eternity in my soul to make me lose patience.

Now there are the moments instead of eternities, moments passing as quickly as the whirling waters of a mountain river. The Understanding becomes Misunderstanding and the Absurd becomes misunderstood. The Absurd is my only salvation, my only ring-shaped life-buoy in these whirling waters of the Atlantic in which the stars don't reflect anymore. I have to understand it and take it as the only and wise meaning of this nightmare of mine called life.

"Mister, can't you understand that I want you to leave?" Irene flew at me this time.

In that moment I dropped the bunch of roses, which spread on the cold, inexpressive, blue-linoleum floor.

"I didn't come here to bribe you, Mrs. Lawyer! I'm sorry I couldn't phone you before I came, but I've been so busy with other business matters that it was impossible for me to phone you. Still I hope you'll help me, too, in a succession trial."

I didn't even realize how I told her all that and then I understood another thing, that is, in certain extremely intense moments of their life, when their being passes through the most unusual hardships, people show an extreme clearness which is controlled by their subconscious. For nothing in the world could I have thought then at the Philosopher's succession trial or even at the fact that the Philosopher got well and that he was now Arnold Parkins, the medical dean, one of the most famous surgeons in Chicago. I couldn't think why the Philosopher could recover and Irene couldn't. Even

though the Princess killed herself, she did it while being conscious.

The Princess was perfectly aware that there was no Tower of Faith and that her Prince was just an Illusion that didn't belong to the Illusion of this Dream we are living. The Princess wanted the Schizophrenia. She felt truly happy in the Schizophrenia's empire on which territory there was the Deliria kingdom with the noble family, Delirium and Deliria.

"So you have a succession trial" Irene said with a proud countenance and looking at me with a superiority air.

"Yes, madam! And that is why I haven't phoned before coming, because you have been recommended to me by an old client of yours for whom you had a similar trial." I told her that trying to find out what actually happened with the Philosopher's trial.

"Very well, sir! Can you tell me what client recommended me to you?"

"You were recommended to me by the Philosopher, I don't know if you still remember him."

Irene placed her hand to her temples and frowned her forehead trying to remember the Philosopher. Then she said:

"Yes, sir, I remember perfectly! I had him as a client a few days ago. He had a succession trial. I won it for him."

"Can you tell me what decision has been reached regarding the Philosopher?" I asked her as I couldn't believe it. So Arnold Parkins has really been in the hypnotic trance phase and he has spoken to Irene, only that two days have already passed in the reality that trial took place in, which proves a more conspicuous passage of time than in our reality. Again, I couldn't believe that Irene was really sick. But what if it's just a trick, and she smiles all of a sudden and jumps into my arms?! Yet another thought was bringing me down on earth and was telling me to stop dreaming and to try to face reality as it is, with its good and bad things. I couldn't understand why the Philosopher had no influence on Irene. Once her Voice had accepted the Illusion of the Reality as a gift, that is, the fact that her Reality was an Illusion and not the Reality of the Illusion, that is, the fact that the Illusion exists in the Reality. Why would her Voice have cried: "It's a trap!" if it hadn't considered itself defeated through the Philosopher's trial? Is it that my game of chess with Irene's Voice finished with a drawn game and not with a checkmate? I can't understand. I have to see reality as it is, that is, reality and not Reality.

"I can't tell you what decision has been taken regarding the Philosopher" Irene said in a drawling voice.

"Why?"

"Because the deontology of our profession doesn't allow us to tell what decisions have been taken for our clients" Irene answered in a more decided and dynamic voice this time.

"What if I beg you?" I tried to make Irene change her mind.

"Even so, you are not allowed mister." Irene said. "You cannot know what decisions have been taken regarding one file or another. Not only regarding the Philosopher's file."

"If I became your regular client, couldn't you tell me at the end what decision has been taken regarding this case?"

"No way, sir! No way! Even if you became a client of my law firm, I still couldn't reveal to you the results regarding the decisions the Court had taken for the other clients."

"Please, I'm begging you!" I insisted.

"Sir, why do you insist so much for me to make something illegal?"

The truth was that I had become very curious of the result of that transcendental

Court's decision precisely because I wanted to know what exactly made Irene remain in the disordered empire of the Schizophrenia. I would have given anything to find it out just like that, but who knows, maybe one day? But in spite of all that, I felt like I was losing every hope. Irene repeated the question:

"Why do you insist for me to make something illegal?"

It was then that I realized that a good while had past and, being lost in my thoughts, I have forgotten everything about the question.

"I don't insist for you to make something illegal."

"Then why are you asking me to tell you the results of the decisions the Courts has ruled for my clients?"

"Because I want to know what they obtained after they addressed to the Courts." I promptly answered.

"Who are you?"

"I'm Sorin!" I answered calmly.

"Sorin, Sorin, So-rin, So-rin,, Sorin!" Irene repeated, swinging from one side to another.

"Yes, I'm Sorin!"

The moment I answered her she stood up, staring at me with a look so full of hatred like I've never seen, nor I've ever thought I could see in Irene.

"Get out of my office, you miserable! Out!!!" was Irene shouting at the top of her voice. "You, scum, you promised to the Voice that you would never ever stain my image with your ugly face and your empty soul! Get out, out, out!!! I'm the Lawyer! The Lawyer!! The Lawyer!!! Do you understand that, you moron?!! I'm the Law-yer!!! The Law-yer!!! The Law-yer!!! Never again should you come to my office!!! Never! Never! Did you get it? Ne-ver!!! Ne-ver!!! Ne-ver!!!"

On hearing Irene's desperate cries, the stretcher bearers came along with a doctor that was on duty that moment, so there was no need for me to knock on the door. They first immobilized her and then they administrated her a strong sedative. Her last words before she went to sleep were: "Ne-ver! ... Ne-ver! ... Ne-ver! ...". She said them lower and lower and slowly until any syllable was reduced to silence like a candle that throws its last flames in the night and then blows out.

The doctor who administrated Irene the sedative asked me to leave. This time I complied with his request. I don't even know how I passed through the long, endless hallways with rooms in which there were as many Voices as there were rooms on that endless hallway. I don't know how I passed the gate, how I took a taxi as I don't know what I was doing on the Miami sea wall in the middle of the night. All I remember is that I was trying to look for the stars that maybe would have reflected nevertheless in the black, whirling waters of the Atlantic. Although it had clouded over and had started raining with many, cold drops, I continued to search for the stars reflected in the foamy waves of the American Winter until the brake of day. And yet, I don't know why and I don't know for how many hours I kept repeating in my mind: "Never! Never! Never! Ne-ver!", still searching for the stars in the Atlantic.

Chapter 12

I was walking on the endless halls of the airport in Singapore just to relax my feet a little. I stopped in front of some stall with very beautifully adorned jewels. As far as I can see there are some great jewelers in Singapore.

"Hi, Sandra! How are you?!" I exclaimed almost without realizing it to the woman standing next to me and admiring the same jewels. I don't know what came over me, but I can honestly say that it never happened to me before. I had a sudden, uncontrolled reaction.

"I'm sorry ..." she said. "I'm not Sandra."

"Yes, probably there is a mistake." There was a mistake in deed, but what stroke me was the fact that the woman standing in front of me looked just like the Sandra in that dream I had at the beginning of the trip when I had fallen asleep a little. I was close to telling her that she had forgotten her certificates near the Palace of Justice in New-York, I wanted to tell her that I was had called her: Sandra! Sandra! and she didn't hear me. I wanted to tell her that the beautiful eyes fixing me now were the eyes in my dream. I wonder how she would react if I told her that I dreamed about her. She would definitely think that I am crazy. She would tell me that we had never met, and I dreamed about her Maybe she would think that I am crazy. So what? Sometimes we need a little madness in our lives.

"I know your name is not Sandra. It was a mistake. I'm sorry ..." I told her feeling that I was suffocating, that the words themselves are the rope that tightens me to the wood of the gibbet. On that moment I felt I was the most coward man in the world. I don't know why, but I couldn't tell her I had a dream about her. I was afraid I might become ridiculous.

"It's a confusion", said the woman and then she turned and walked away.

I don't know why, but this time I wouldn't like to lose her just like I did in my dream. I ran to her and I told her:

"I know you are not Sandra, but I named you like this because I had a dream of you a few hours ago, while I was flying."

"You were flying?" she asked me.

"Yes. In less than thirty minutes my plane will take off from the airport in Singapore. But where are you going?"

"Australia", said the woman.

"I happen to go to Australia too. We are both probably going to flight in the same plane that came from Amsterdam" I said.

"That's right, sir. I come from Amsterdam too", said the woman, "but what kind of dream you said you had?"

"It's odd, but it is true"

"You should know that this is not my time for flirting", she told me, giving me a kind of strange look.

"It's not about that", I told her.

"Then what is it about?" she asked me.

"I dreamt you in front of the Palace of Justice in New-York. You lost some papers in my dream and although I ran after you and called you, you waked on one of the streets that cross the boulevard on which the Palace of Justice is. When I got to that street, you were gone. It was a dream in which I felt I loved you"

"You felt you loved me? Me?" said the woman interrupting me, and then she continued: "My name is Christine."

"I'm Sorin Cerin."

"Where did you say you were going, Mr. Cerin?" she asked me.

"I would like you to call me Sorin." I answered.

"So, where are you going, Sorin?"

"OK, that's more like it, Christine. I'm going to Australia, more precisely Melbourne."

"Are you an Australian?"

"Not exactly", I said.

"Well?" said Christine.

"I'm American. I live in New-York, Christine."

"New-York? What a small world", said Christine.

"Why, Christine?"

"Because I'm an American too and I also live in New-York."

"As far as I can see, you travel pretty much", I said.

"That's right. I have a job that keeps me traveling a lot", said Christine, after a moment of silence followed by a sighing. "I'm a journalist."

"Interesting profession, Christine", I said.

"You know something, Sorin, don't call me Christine. I never liked being called Christine."

"OK, but how can I call you then?"

"Call me Chris, just Chris."

"OK, Chris."

"Perfect, Sorin, that's more like it. What about you?" asked Christine.

"What about me?" I asked her.

"What do you do for a living?" she asked me.

"Art pieces, especially paintings", I said.

"Paintings? It seems to be an interesting job. Are you a painter?"

"No", I answered. "Actually I sell paintings."

"Oh, I understand. As far as I can see, you also have a job that keeps you traveling."

"Yes, that's true, it's just that after a few years to much is as bad as none at all. I wish I didn't have to travel so much all over this world. A man needs quite after a while."

"You don't seem to be so old." said Chris, smiling.

"I'm forty-five."

"I'm forty." said Christine. "It's quite an age, isn't it?"

"I think that every person has the age he feels. You can be a child if you are eighty years old as well."

"I think you are right here, Sorin. Many old people sink in their second childhood."

"This is not what I meant, Chris."

"Then what did you mean, Sorin?"

"We feel young or old not depending on our biological age but on our soul."

"Well, what kind of soul do you think I have, Sorin?"

"I think it is young", I answered her looking into her eyes. Only after a while I realized that it was for the first time we were looking straight into each other's eyes, without her looking away. I could felt a kind of positive energy coming out of her, I felt I needed to lose myself as deep as possible into her eyes, that all the secrets of the Universe are hiding in Irene's eyes.

"If our souls are young, let's run to the plane, otherwise we might miss it", she told me.

I was lost in my thoughts and I almost forgot. Instantaneously, I looked at my

watch. There were three minutes until the plane took off. We got to the aircraft just when one of the air hostess was about to close the door.

"I travel at business class", said Chris smiling and she went to her seat.

"OK, I'll take that into account."

"Please sit down and fasten your seat belts because we are getting ready for taking off", we could hear an air hostess in the board loudspeakers.

As I had no other choice, I went to my place, fastened my seatbelt and I noticed a flashing light announcing me that smoking was forbidden on those moments. No problem, I don't smoke. Suddenly I felt the plane moving. We were running on the airport to the taking off track. During this time we could hear the captain's voice welcoming us on board in the flight with this number, with the destination Singapore – Sidney. I was looking through the windows as we were running in the night on the concrete platforms of the airport.

After more than a quarter of an hour we finally stooped. We were on our taking off track. The engines that until now had buzzed softly started to whistle sharper and sharper, more and more powerful, until we started to run with increasing speed. I don't know why, but every time a plane takes off with me, I have a strange sensation, something between liberty and fear, between mystery and magic, between absolute and our helpless state, of we are as a human being from birth to death. In a word, I had a sensation of absolute and helplessness.

Suddenly I didn't feel the wheels that were running on the track, making the plane shake. We were flying and my mind took me in a very strange way to the moment of death, wondering if then we will feel this sensation of flying just like now. Will it be a taking off just like that, or something else? What is really strange is that the human being always wanted to be able to take off even if it meant death. Maybe within our subconscious we are born so that we want to die, so that we understand that life has its meaning only in death and that eternal life wouldn't be possible just like death doesn't exist in itself, but only related to life, just like the stars do not shine on the sky without death to which life relates to, without the illusion that is called our existence.

What is really true in all this decay that is the dream of each of us, taken for destiny? *Is life real? No way, because if it had been real, there would have been such things as death, the absurd or the illusion that we live, which means reality and, in fact, is nothing but a perverse game given by senses and by the existential level in which we live. The senses are nothing else but a standardization of illusion to a large number of individuals that comprise humanity. The real pillars which humanity leans upon are the five senses that each of us has through our genetic information itself.* The genetic information represented to us be genes and chromosomes, a pattern that belongs to illusion and that is generalized to all human beings, illusion that is generalized to all human beings who generate a civilization tributary to the genetic pattern itself, to the illusion.

How would such a civilization look like, a civilization in which the genetic pattern of the human being would develop several senses during its evolution, instead of five senses we would have, let's say fifty? Would we be happier? Would we suffer more? Is life real? Then what's the point in living this dream with time and space? Should everything have a meaning in this world? If everything happens for no reason and the so-called meaning of existence of procreating on and on, of building new civilizations on and on, only exists within us and vanishes when each of us dies? Does everything happen with a purpose? If so, what is that? What is the purpose of life existing just through death, related to death and of death existing through life, related to life? Is there such a thing as death? No, because death always lives through life, just like life exists through death. Then there is no life and no death, no space and no time,

nothing else but genetic patterns, the sole traces which the illusion of our existence leaves to know that it also exists beyond life and death, beyond being, somewhere in the Great Contemplation of the Great Creator of the Universe, where the thought exists in itself, without space or time, without its attribute of dimensionality, because this attribute belongs to the senses and perception that will create the thought containing within its structure the spatial-temporality argument without which it cannot express itself, just like a car has to use a certain bridge in order to cross the river. The Great Contemplation which lays at the origin of the existence is a thought that is not structured in the spatial-temporal bonds of some genetic pattern, no matter how many senses it might generate.

The Great Contemplation is the thought that doesn't admit the infinite because the meaning of the infinite exists in its quintessence, just like it doesn't admit time and space that could create the infinite, or the multitude of spatial-temporal dimensions. The Great Contemplation is the absolute thought of the basic truth, is alpha and omega of the Universe, is the beginning and the end at the same time of the Universe in which we live within one of the endless spiritual-existential levels with billions and billions of stars and galaxies whose lights would flash on the sky, some of them after thousands, others after tens of thousands or millions of years of an existential level with only five senses. An existential level where we know that during our life we would suffer, want, work. First of all work. We also know that if we want to be really happy in life, beside the tribute each of us pays to luck or happening, there is also the suffering that we have to pay for happiness, that price that can kill us, that zeal we have to hunt the happiness that we will never really get to know. The real happiness is a Fata Morgana in our existential-spiritual level.

We also know that the only thing that can make us really happy is love; this is maybe the only real thing in the illusory dream of our existence. But we also learned that when you love, you suffer for the simple reason that love is the only thing that verges on the absolute in our illusion, with a genetic pattern of genes and chromosomes. All that verges on the absolute in our existence becomes absurd, precisely because we will never be able to understand, we won't even get close to it one way or another and thus, when we truly love we become nothing more, nothing less than absurd. And this wouldn't mean anything if we would become absurd just for the people around us. The unhappiness of the human being relies precisely in feeling the absurd instead of the absolute of love although it is aware of the snowflakes of the feelings that lay in higher and higher heaps at the feet of the Liberty Statue that has been guarding New-York for such a long time. The city I live in, the city Chris lives in, the city we both happen to live in.

Any tendency to absolute becomes absurd to us, even if we feel that it is not that way, and this is because we will never be able to understand the absolute. It will remain for the rest of our lives, for each of us, that exorbitantly expensive jewel with pearls and diamonds, which we will never afford, which we will never feel in our palms wrinkled by the work of time, which we will be able to offer to our lover so that we can be really happy when we love. All these because that jewel is called absolute and nobody will ever be born rich enough, because of the genetic pattern he has, in order to be able to obtain the absolute, to take out of his pocket so much money, banknotes of the Empire of Contemplation, so that to buy it through the bank called meditation. Is chance or the genetic pattern the one that makes us want such a jewel from the absurd, and every time we go to the shop in the window of which there is that expensive jewel, that absolute of our love, we would realize that we are nothing but some vagrants of fate in this life, we would understand that we would never be able to buy it nor even to look at it because it is such a shiny jewel that it would hurt our eyes to bleeding,

torturing us in the most horrible way.

This is the essence of human happiness, in the sense that all that we could ever want in order to become happy is such an expensive thing that we will never have, and moreover, that thing would cause us the most terrible torments, it would blind us with its brilliance because by the genetic pattern of the illusion we **live**, we are not ready to be happy, we are not build for that.

I'm sorry to say that wherever we might be on the social level and however deceived we might be with joy, or if we would be close to a certain success, this is just a drunkenness state and the next day in the morning we will go through the seediness after drinking, whether we want it or not.

We are meant to know only one thing.

We know that the jewel of the absolute exists in the shop window of our illusion, that this jewel spreads the purest and strongest light in the world.

We also know that we are in a great need of light in the darkness of our life.

That this light that we need so much hurts us. That the light irradiated by the excessively expensive jewel of the absolute is love itself.

We also know that we are not meant to receive this light and this love in the eyes of our soul that is so blind by birth.

Nevertheless, we know one thing: that there is love and light and that we want them as if we were some thirsty people in the desert, who haven't seen water in days, that we want to sip them although they burn our throat like the fire produced by the hottest plasmas of our feelings, we want them to light us with its powerful spectrum although our eyes will bleed and we shall loose our sight that has only shown us the ordinary and the nothingness so far.

Only then we shall understand within this existential-spiritual level we live in one can never love unless he's blind.

In my vision the Universe has the following structure: God, by His Great Contemplation, gave birth or, better said, determined the Evolution without relation to time or space of the Great Contemplation, that is of the Original Thought of God who Contemplates the first form of neo-ontological and gnosological structuralizing which is the Person, different from God, but which exists in His Original Thought.

The Person also has the Power of self-decision, so the Free Will.

When I say Evolution, I don't state that it is subjected to a beginning or an end, because at this level we cannot talk about spatial-temporal dimensionality.

The Person next to his Great Creator, God, has an infinite number of Personalizations within his structure, and they are hierarchically inferior to the Person.

Why?

Because the Person as a whole has a certain function, that of being an absolute system of reference for the infinity of Personalizations who are hierarchically inferior to the Person.

Why?

The Person's faces are infinite and each face is a Personalization.

A finite number of faces of the Person would determine a Original Thought and a Great Contemplation of the Great Creator, finite, which is not at all true. This is the principle that the God's greatness relies on.

To determine the Person's and the Personalizations' Evolution, but without existing because the Existence belongs to spatial and temporal dimensions of a beginning and an end. The Person with his faces, the Personalizations, need Notions, as infinite as the Person's faces.

Well, these Notions are not only as infinite as the Person's faces, meaning the Personalizations, but also each Personalization has an infinite number of Notions. It would be useless to think that any phenomenon or thing, even if it doesn't belong to the existence or non-existence, could be Determined by the infinite Evolution without a Notion of Itself.

When we talk about an infinite number of faces of a Single Person we accept the idea of infinity within a whole.

So it happens with the infinity of Notions within a single face out of the infinity of faces of the Personalization.

In a word, infinite within a whole, infinite within infinite.

We should admit that no characteristic of a Personalization could be possible without the Notion Itself that denominates the Personalization in question.

At the level of Notions as structure, there are the State Notions.

There is an infinite number of State Notions within a single Notion and, by their characteristics, they determine the Notion that, in its turn, will determine, by its characteristics, a face of the Person, which means the Personalization.

Only now, at the level of the State Notion, we can talk of existence, with its special and temporal dimensional attributes.

The existence is a mere State Notion, just like Non-existence and another infinity of such State Notions.

At large, that would be my philosophical pattern about the Universe, about God, about Infinite.

The Evolution is not necessary an attribute of Existence and neither Determination which might not belong to space and time.

The Infinite and the Whole are the pillars of the Universe.

The Whole does not mean finite, but the system that fences in the structuralizing of the Infinite and that is asymptotic, in a word, it belongs to some geometry of the Infinite.

The Infinite wouldn't have Develop without the Whole and the Whole wouldn't have Develop without the Infinite.

One represents the reference of the other.

I used the word Develop because the one of "Exist" is very improper, as the Infinite and the Whole do not belong to the Existence.

The Existence is nothing else but a mere State Notion out of an infinite number of other State Notions.

Only when we talk about the Existential State Notion where there is our Spatial and Dimensional Level of three-dimensionality we can talk of TO BE and NOT TO BE.

There are an infinite number of spatial and temporal dimensions within a State Notion.

It is the same in the Non-existential State Notion or in the other State Notions where we can no longer talk about times and spaces but about their attributes, which are assimilated by other and other representations of ideas that are similar but also different.

In the Existential State Notion, among the infinity of Spatial and Temporal Levels, there is also Our World, the one of three-dimensionality, a World that EXISTS through the Illusion of Life with three-dimensional attributes.

Only here there are people, us.

I wonder how would the Great Contemplation or Its Original Thought and the absolute conceive the chance?

To dream about a woman while flying above Russia and when in Singapore to

really meet her?

How would chance conceive that this woman is from the same city as I am, from New York?

Is everything just a happening in the dream of life?

What is the meaning of this happening?

No one will ever understand it, just as we cannot understand the meaning of the future or the past or the present either.

We cannot understand why we die at a certain date and not at another.

Why does life need death and why does death need life?

After all, why there is this dualism of the opposites?

The two sexes, the two opposites, good and evil, what is meaning for which the Great Contemplation accepted this within our special and temporal level?

Why couldn't we accept seven or eight or a thousand opposites instead of this dualism?

I am looking through the window. We are flying above the Pacific. The sky is cloudy. The clouds wrap the ocean up with their black mantle covering any light that might have come from some ship sailing on these waters.

Above, the starry sky that we feel closer by one second of a dream, by ten thousand meters of thought, I know that we are flying although I am thinking about good and evil. Is it really good that the black mantle of the clouds covers the ocean causing storms and ship wrecks down there, under the clouds?

Is it good that there is that mantle of clouds that, once on the continent, will robe in with its tears the green paradise or hell of the jungles?

What is really good or bad, paradise or hell?

Is it good that there is life or death? Is life bad? Would we know what good is if we didn't know the evil and we would know what life is if death didn't exist?

Why do we have to relate to a certain system of reference on each moment of our life, of this illusion?

What is this system of reference in itself?

What external or internal factor does it start from? Is it a social factor, so an external one, or a sentimental, internal one? Never during our life can we really have reference to a different internal or external factor. They both have the same answer, even though the social starts from the individual, cognitive, affective and volitional, which means from the consciousness of each person who, at the level of the masses, verges on their cognitive, affective, volitional, so their social consciousness determines in time the degree of civilization. Thus, we can talk of the degree of civilization of a century, or a decade. Nevertheless, what is the system of reference to which we shall have to accede in order to know good and evil, beauty and foul?

One should know that, during the centuries, the notion of beauty and foul changed continuously and we could mention the fashion or the artistic, literary or philosophical trends, which alternated according to the way of understanding this system of reference.

In order to think of good and evil, first of all I should ask myself one single question: What is the meaning of our existence on this planet, provided that it is a planet, from the moment we are born to the moment of our death?

Do I know it?

No!

Only the Primordial Thought of the Great Contemplation of the Great Creator of Universe will know it some day.

Then, if I don't know who I am or if I exist because I don't know whether good or evil, life and death, beauty and foul really exist, what am I?

I know all these because I don't know the real system of reference to which they

should limit.

And I can only think of one answer to the question: Why do I exist? What is the meaning of existence?

And this answer is: "The Absurd". The Absurd is the only system of reference for the dualism of the opposites, namely good and evil, beauty and foul, truth and untruth and so many others.

I'm convinced that the dualism of the opposites is dualism and not a billion of opposites precisely because of the single trace left by the illusion of our life within this spiritual level in which we exist, namely our genetic code.

Our genetic code that helps us dream, somehow communally, the great dream of civilization, of society, of human history and destiny through the dualism of the opposites, which also knows only the past and present, because the future is always subjected to prediction.

If the system of reference for good and evil is the Absurd that incorporates within its structure all the notions that the human mind cannot conceive, such as the spatial and temporal infinite or the infinite of the spirituality levels or of the absolute, we could identify it with the Great contemplation Itself that we shall never be able to comprehend, but again, this identification is an illusion of the Absurd itself, because by its quintessence it allows us to understand all that is meaningless.

Thus, we may find as meaningless both the existence of the Great Contemplation and the infinity that exists in the Great Contemplation, without preceding it because the Great Contemplation created the infinite and not the other way around.

The Great Contemplation created the Absurd and not the other way around.

On the other hand, the Great Contemplation is nothing else but the Contemplation of the Great Creator of the Universe.

We are always tempted to grant everything is incomprehensible to the Absurd.

And we could say again: if in our case what is incomprehensible is meaningless and absurd, for the Great Contemplation it becomes totally intelligible and it has a meaning, just like the Infinite or the Absurd.

Thus, at the level of the Great Contemplation, the Absurd gets a well-defined meaning, intelligible.

What we, in this existence, feel that is of no value, of no meaning, on the contrary, at those superior levels is as valuable as possible, having a very concrete meaning.

Once every action of ours in the illusion of life based on the dualism of the opposites is limited, as reference point, to the Absurd, we find out that this is actually the well-defined meaning of the infinite, if the incomprehensible, of everything that is meaningless for us, but nothing takes place by chance except for us, entities that we consider to be alive in a world that we cannot understand.

So the reference system of the opposites is limited to the Absurd and this is the Absurd that for us means the Will and the Meaning that the Great Contemplation of the Great Creator gave to the Universe.

Thus, each soul is permanently limited and related to God.

Only now I can say: did God intend paradise and hell for the souls from the Great Contemplation?

Then what is hell necessary for?

Why didn't God make us good and perfect from the beginning, owners of some billions of senses in one of the highest spiritual levels possible?

Why did He make us stumble against the Absurd when we want to find good and evil, beauty and foul?

Why didn't He offer us the opportunity of having ten billion of opposites instead of two?

In order to answer to those questions I'm sure that I could state an infinite number of reasons for which God gave us paradise and hell and suffering and misery and blindness, just like I could also state reasons for which God allowed us to know that there is light and paradise and love even though we shall never have them except from the poets' pen, because God gave us poetry.

I wonder what would be like if we understood the Absurd?

We would know the meaning of chance and the temporal element that completely prevents us from understanding the Infinite and the Absurd, and this would be the Future, so Prediction.

Could we exist if we knew our Future, the time of our death, when we shall love and when we shall suffer, when we shall be killed or stolen from, or hurt or when we shall be rich or when we shall lose everything?

Don't we need the Absurd?

Could we understand the Absurd without knowing the three coordinates of Time, Future, Present and Past or the supra-dimensionality of Space beside its three dimensions?

What if time itself becomes, at a certain moment, a forth spatial dimension passing from the future to the past through the present?

And even if we knew all these, yet we wouldn't understand the Absurd.

Would we accept the idea of Absurd?

We would definitively accept it for us, as people, but not for God who is above space or time, who allowed us to exist precisely out of His absolute love for the being. The Prediction, like snowdrifts on the mountain of the future that we should melt with our love for the other fellow creatures, moment by moment, time after time, century after century, millennium after millennium, quietly waiting for our Time, the Time of the Great Passing over the bridge of light of the Absolute that we wanted our entire life, but we were too poor to buy it, without knowing that Prediction was meant by God in order to offer us the great surprise during the Great Passing, when Prediction will tell us: "Now you have the Absolute of Love and Truth for free".

Only then we shall understand why God wrapped us in the mantle of Prediction during our entire life on Earth.

Only during the Great Passing we shall understand why the Great Creator of the Universe found it difficult to allow us, ever since we are born on this Earth, to know the destiny relived and the un-lived love and the noise of the quietness that spitted the drums of our heart, looking for the sea and the whispers and the roaring of the waves that broke the time itself against the cliffs into billions of drops, so that one more generation would feed with time, a century, a millennium, civilizations and cliffs that are wear away like sphinxes.

Only during the Great Passing we shall thank Him for giving us the **Prediction** as a fundamental attribute of our ephemeral happiness, through which He made us live the present that would have lost any trace of relevance if we knew the Future.

I myself received, through destiny, from the existence, a drop of moment from the wave of time, broken against the cliffs. A drop that, once alive, fell on the black rock of the shore of infinite and maybe of immortality refreshing it with a drop of love, suffering, and also disappointment, happiness, sad happiness when the drop was called life and destiny and hope and then nothingness.

We are flying at more than twelve thousand meters. Somewhere, a dark blue is profiled against the horizon, which creates a different shade of color in comparison with the dark mist that used to surround us. The only shade of light was piercing through the windows illuminating the wing; there were also the position lights in the top of the wings, intermittently on and out.

I know that somewhere towards the horizon the Dawn will emerge and it will soon become another day in the calendar. It will become history just like so many other dawns that the ocean, the geological times, the sailors and the passengers of transcontinental plains knew.

Is the fact that I met Christine pure chance?

Tell me, God, whether it is pure chance or not. You know everything because we exist through Your Thought, with senses and feelings, creatures whose significance in this life is unknown to me, but we built ourselves transcontinental planes and spaceships.

Why do we wittingly accept the lie in our lives?

Shall we understand the Absurd and the Infinite some day if we reach towards the stars?

Can we get closer to them? No, never, because however closer we might get to the Absolute and the Infinite, we shall never reach either of them, let alone embrace them in the mortals' arms that are thirsty of Absolute.

Then why do we keep trying to reach the stars?

Do we really believe that we would find ourselves billions of light-years away from the Earth?

We shall come to understand that however much we might try to distance, however much we might develop the illusion of physical remoteness by means of technologies, it doesn't exit, just like speed does not exist. It is an attribute of the way in which the illusion of space and time is expressed in our consciousness.

The entire Universe exists within each of us and it dies with us.

The endless spaces and distances are within us.

Prediction is within us, just like the free will, which is nothing else but the unchaining of Prediction from its current metaphysical state and its freedom to fly and to take our will, desire, feelings and knowledge with it. Thus the flight of Prediction is as smooth and unruffled as possible, covering larger and larger spaces and times, and we have no idea that those times and spaces are within our selves.

This is the origin of the illusory Free Will that would have never existed if it hadn't been for Prediction.

We can predict an event, we can precede it, but we cannot determine it. Thus, Prediction, by the indeterminism of the Event creates the Free Will that covers will, desire, knowledge, feelings, hopes, but also fear, anguish, courage, vanity, selfishness, pride, and all the bad and good things in the wishes and hopes of the human being.

The Free Will is the only liberty, even if it is illusory, of the human being; it is everything that could offer significance to our life, and this is because Prediction cannot determine the Event, even though the Event is determined by the Great Contemplation.

Would we be the same if the Event or the Prediction didn't exist, if the Future wrapped up in its mystery mantle wasn't unknown to us?

The paradox of the human creature's suffering consists in this absurd desire to know its future, to build its future that it doesn't know, to always climb like a Sissify, carrying the Uncertainty in its back, the mountain of knowledge.

The human being wants to eliminate Uncertainty, Chance, Prediction in order to find itself, in order to reach the top of the mountain, without realizing that if it Uncertainty, Chance, Prediction didn't exist, it would come to selfdestruction.

Why is the Way of Humanity so tread by the footsteps of the Great Cosmic Destiny towards self-destruction?

Towards the Apocalypse?

Because the Apocalypse is within each of us and, as a paradox, the Apocalypse itself is the one that gives us life and keeps us alive.

A great paradox of the human being is that the self-rediscovers leads to Apocalypse and the self-alienation leads to life.

The more we shout in pubs and bawdy houses or at games, at everything that is, humanly speaking, immoral, it means that we shall live our lives but we shall alienate from ourselves.

Every time we try to find ourselves again, we shall walk in quick steps towards Death, towards Apocalypse both at individual and social level.

Is this terrible Paradox at the basis of the original punishment that we get as a result of the Original Sin?

Then what should we choose?

Self-rediscovers that consists in Death, in Apocalypse or in self-alienation like only the Illusion of our Existence is capable of doing it?

Sometimes I'm afraid to live my life because I know it is a "life" sentence as a result of the Original Sin, of a sin that comes from who knows what spiritual and dimensional space, an illusion of a sin for which the Great Contemplation convicted me through the Great Paradox, the Paradox of Suffering: to the Self-discovery through Apocalypse and Self-alienation through Life.

Then why were we given life?

Just to accept that the Free Will gives Life a meaning averting Uncertainty, Chance and Prediction, taking them to Self-destruction, to Apocalypse?

It seems that this is the only truth that we can accept, namely the Great Paradox of Suffering.

Many philosophers looked for determining cause of the Original Sin. Some stated that long ago, in the dawns of human history, some forerunners of ours would have stained with blood the dawns with their immorality. If it hadn't been like this, it means that the Great Contemplation would have made a mistake by granting them the liberty to act within the **Free Will**, a liberty that is harmful for the evolution of both the spiritual levels and for the dimensional ones within the Original Thought of the Great Contemplation.

Another cause would be that those forerunners of birth were living, were alive, so their spiritual level was complying with the laws of the Paradoxes.

Naturally, once we mention the paradox, we could also mention the Original Sin. In conclusion I accept that the Original Sin that would belong to Humanity never existed in our Illusory Reality as a fact but as a Necessity.

We need the Original Sin because it is our only friend, maybe the greatest friend of our Life. The Original Sin helps us rediscover ourselves, even though we do not live our life with all the opportunities that it might offer us and that would lead to self-alienation.

How could we find ourselves by accepting Uncertainty, Chance and Prediction without also accepting the Original Sin?

This is the fault of the Absurd and of its Paradoxes in making us feel strangers to ourselves in Life. Thus, we need the Original Sin, because we need the Guilt.

Once we accept the Original Sin and the Guilt of existing, we also accept the existence of Uncertainty, Chance and Prediction as part of the surrounding world and we shall never have to understand them because they are given as some bars guarding our cell in the prison of our Destiny, which we shall never escape from, and we shall have to accept the condition of convicted creatures, as a result of our Guilt deriving from the Original Sin.

This is the way Religion was created, the only thing in which the human creature

can truly find itself.

If we didn't have Religion, Original Sin and Guilt, we would have invented them.

This is how we can get to the Apocalypse.

We could consider death as liberation. But another aspect of the Great Paradox of Suffering is when some people choose Life with Self-alienation. These are the ones who deny the idea of the Original Sin, of this Great Guilt of existing.

The harder they will try to live their life to the full the more they will realize that the limit of the pleasures is the Fata Morgana that doesn't exist.

Those poor people will come to carry their burden on the mountain of their own Destiny in their way to death. That terrible burden of pleasures, of drug dependence, of carnal love, of immortality, of obsessions, of all kinds of vices, of selfishness, of fortunes gathered during their lifetime and of so many other things. Those poor people will not receive death as liberation but, on the contrary, as a great loss, a great misfortune. Both the Self-rediscovered and the Self-alienated are preparing for Death during their entire life, doing nothing else.

Something tells me to go to Christine's seat. I don't know why. I'm afraid to live my life. I feel that my Destiny is oppressive. I know it isn't like that.

I know that each of us has a book of life, with more or less old pages; each of us has his book, his life.

I am going to Australia, to Melbourne, with the Mall Tower whose temples were covered by the roof of the Mall, by the roof of the place where anything can be bought and sold, anything, even feelings, on the counters that are stained by the moments of human condition put up to auction for one single price: life.

I remember how my wife Irene was telling me about the Mall Tower. It was many years ago, in Melbourne. I couldn't understand why the Southern Star didn't sparkle on the top of the Tower, or of the old general, as Irene used to say. Why didn't it sparkle on its forehead, but on the mercantile roof of the Mall? Why do we hurry to sell everything? Is quite everything for sale, even the old general from the Mall? With his history, with his live stories, with the moment when the Southern Star was kissing it on its forehead? Why is everything for sale? This is what Irene could not understand. She couldn't understand that actually the present Civilization chose selling as one of the fewest sciences of self-rediscover, the one of really living your life.

What difference does it make if we sell feelings or ourselves?

After all, we stake on the moment. On that certain moment when we could really live our life.

Even if we lived a thousand years, we want at least one moment within this thousand years to be the moment of our life, of our supreme happiness that we would never forget and that we would experience over and over again by memory.

We are desperately looking for this moment, selling everything we have best in ourselves, even the last piece of feeling in order to have money in a Civilization in which everything is for sale, everything can be bought and finally, exhausted by this hard work, we would be rich, not in our souls but in fortunes that can offer us expensive gifts nicely adorned with false and marketable feelings. Just as marketable as our feelings used to be once.

Only then we shall realize that love for money and everything that is related to the selling is not love or feeling because the human creature can never actually sell its feelings, because the human creature has one more attribute except the Free Will, namely the Sacred.

However much we might try to mix Sacred with Profane or to substitute the Free Will to the Sacred we shall not succeed, because the Sacred represents the Selfalienation and the Profane represents the Self-rediscovery.

It was natural that the Civilization, in trying to find itself again, would accept the "selling", but it could not include Sacred within its empire, because it couldn't have afforded to sell feelings on erotic lines, at the corner of the street or in advertisements. It is painful that the Sacred represents self-alienation for people and the Profane represents self-rediscovery; it is painful that the Sacred makes us strangers to ourselves just like the feelings that belong to the Sacred.

We shall never be able to substitute the Sacred to the Free Will even if we might try to assign it certain characteristics of the Profane.

It is painful that the feelings makes us strangers to ourselves, that they urge us to belong to another nature by their Sacred feature, to a stranger nature that we want but we cannot live because it doesn't flow in our vanes and in our blood, because it is different from the human one.

The Profane belongs to the human nature by the Free Will that we would like to assign to the Sacred.

Even though the Sacred rests within our aspirations and desires, the Profane rests within our necessities and needs, such as food, subsistence, procreation and so many others.

There is another Paradox here, this time between Sacred and Profane. The human being aspires to and wants the Sacred, but he needs the Profane.

However much we might try to find that moment of supreme happiness, we shall never have it because we can only exist through Sacred.

The feelings belong to the Sacred and no one, regardless the money and positions he might have, will be able to buy a single form of true feeling without receiving it for free from the sacred side of the human being.

Chapter 13

Some of us find ourselves in Profane, to a certain extend, others in Sacred, but wherever we might be, Life Itself cannot exist without those two dimensions, because one of them, the Profane, for example, is Self Rediscovery and the Sacred, the Self Alienation because Self Alienation means Apocalypse and the acceptance of Death as Liberation and Self Rediscovery means Life, means Profane, means not to accept Death which becomes destruction.

So Life cannot exist without Sacred and Profane, without Self Rediscovery, without accepting or denying death in a certain way and all these are attributes of the Free Will.

Profane means not only Self Rediscovery but, first of all, it means the fight against Uncertainty, Chance and Prediction, it means to try and know all of these.

As concerns the Sacred, things are opposite because Uncertainty, Chance and Prediction belong to the Guilt coming from the Original Sin, in Sacred the necessity and the needs of human being rely on the Original Sin and the presumed Guilt that comes from it and that is an attribute, over the human being. These are the nourishment and the subsistence necessities of the Sacred. The Original Sin and the Guilt.

Paradoxically, the purest feelings that spring from the depths of human being are based on the nourishment and the subsistence necessities of the Sacred, which are the Original Sin and the Guilt coming from it. So our love will not be honest unless we accept the Original Sin and the Guilt coming from it, unless we accept Sacred and, of course, God.

We cannot love without God.

The Sacred, with all its attributes grew from the debts of the human being, created by the Great Thinking, which, in its turn was created by God and created **Religion**. The Profane, with all its attributes, which grew from the debts of the human being, created by the Great Thinking, which, in its turn was created by God and created **Science**.

Do we agree that Sacred and Profane belong to life, which was created by God? I've always wondered how God could create the Profane. Or how come did God created the Profane? God is defined by Its Sacrality itself. It's simple: If there was no Sacred and Profane in this existential level we are now living in, we wouldn't have the Free Will either. So God gives us the possibility of choosing between right and wrong, between beautiful and ugly, between paradise and hell, between so many opposites. The Great Thinking of God created both Paradise and hell for our spiritualdimensional level. Why? Why did He created Sacred and Profane, Paradise and Hell, Science and Religion, Philosophy? For the Free Will, to make us free, to make us feel that we have a meaning in the existence of the Great Cosmic Sorin of the Universe, an illusory sense that offers us an illusory freedom but lets us discern what we have known for a long time, forever.

As far as we can see, the reason why God allowed us to know Sacred and Profane with all their attributes is the Free Will which was given to us so that we can Discern, Decide, make a Decision, for our Freedom towards which we tend and which helps us discover the illusory sense of life. Something tells me to go to Christine to business class but another thought takes me to Irene, my wife, whom I haven't seen for a long time.

I don't know why, but after the deception I had that day when I hoped she would recover, when I was convinced that she would get well just like the Philosopher whom she had cured at a twenty years distance I felt the need to avoid her in my soul. I cannot hope for anything with regard to Irene, although I love her.

I remember that day when I landed in Miami being sure that I will return her with her. That day when I bought a large bunch of roses for her in spite of the fact that most flower shops had closed. I thought that the flower girl was waiting for me by the chance I was given by God, by the absolute Chance which was going to give the case for me in the fact that my wife, Irene destiny was going to recover from that pitiless and terrible disease called Schizophrenia.

I'll never forget the moment when, contrary to my expectations, she was raving just like before, when I thought that it was a game and then I was aware of the cruel truth. Irene remained tributary to the diagnosis called Schizophrenia and I became convinced that nothing and no one would ever take her back from the claws of that pitiless disease. I remember how the roses I was going to offer her fell on the cold and impersonal floor of her room in that sanatorium where she was hospitalized.

I remember how, owing to a primary instinct, maybe to a primordial instinct of the human soul, instead of going to empty the cup of sorrow in a pub with cheap spirits, cigarette smoke and drunk whores, of the lowest class, I wanted to go to the cliff, on the shore of the ocean, to listen to its waves and its roar, to feel and to believe at the same time that the Ocean is my mother, my father, my adviser and the one in whose arms I can cry, like a child who either did something bad, or didn't receive the gift that he had

wanted so much for a long time. Somewhere in my subconscious I knew that the Ocean can be indifferent to my pain, that he couldn't let the stars with their feeble reflections find themselves in its endless mirrors, like an ode of primordial happiness, when from endless waters and starry dust the Illusion of our existence was created. I felt the foamy waves of the Ocean boiling with rage but also helplessness because they knew that him too, the great Ocean, is a mere Illusion, just me and Irene and her disease and everything, including the stars. He knew that somewhere in this Illusion, at the beginning of the Great Illusion of the Human Evolution, he had a mother and a father, he was the precursor of life, Life was born from him, from the Ocean, Illusion was born from Illusion.

The two years in which I hadn't seen Irene had passed so quickly. I used to visit her at least twice a year before. I almost never took the plane from New-York to Miami. I was driving. I never admitted this but, as much as I wanted to see my wife, I felt something strange, a sort of pain that was telling me to postpone my visit for one day, and one more day, and one hour if it was possible and all these not because I didn't love her and really miss her but because I couldn't see her like that, in that madhouse, I couldn't face the reality I was going to meet in Miami and that became too cruel, too strange, too cold. I was like a person who wanted to swim in a pool with cold water and, instead of plunging directly into the water, would step in little by little to get used to the cold temperature. This is how I felt on those moments. That's why the car didn't through me directly into the pool, but it was offering me a day or two to get used to the cruel reality that was expecting me in Miami.

Mark, my son, told me, not only once, to rebuild my life. Maybe I would like to do that and I know that loneliness is not good either, but I think I lack the courage. I'm a coward, I'm afraid of life after the deception I had. I would like to go to Christine and tell her that I need her, just as much as probably I need air on this moment. I would like to tell her all that, but somewhere inside me there is Irene with a past that stops me. A past that I would like to forget, to through somewhere in a waste box of oblivion. It is a past that doesn't promise me any future, a past full of grief and restlessness, of torture and disillusion, it's my past. Many acquaintances suggested me to try and rebuild my life. To forget is not such a hard or impossible thing to do, but not when your own past is concerned.

It would mean to mutilate yourself, to shorten your life by a few years.

Nevertheless I would agree to try it but I wouldn't agree to one think: that of being some other person, of not being myself any more. I couldn't be another person because I would become a false person, painted with oblivion and self denying and eventually I would feel that my own life does not belong to me any more but to a virtual person who doesn't even exist in my life. A person who would act on my account without representing me at all, a person who would become a kind of guard for my feelings and emotions.

This guard would lock me in a cell, and my feelings and hopes and dreams and obsessions would remain forever closed behind the bars of this cell, with no hope for freedom or escape, with no hope that one day a single feeling or dream or hope could have the slightest goal. So that virtual person would turn from my guard into my own executioner, but not an executioner who would kill this Sorin inside me to create another, but an executioner who, after killing Sorin, would never put anything in his place. Thus, I would become a person without personality, without will, without hopes or dreams, a kind of vegetable that would live and breathe and eat like any other man but the others would not realize that I am nothing else but a marionette of destiny.

Maybe on those moments, when I feel the air emptiness, the atmospheric turbulences that make the plane vibrate in all its parts, when a beautiful woman is

expecting me to pay her a visit at business class, I realize that in spite of the fact that the dawns are getting more and more persistent reddening the wings of the plane I cannot disown my past. I'm not a renegade and so much less a self-renegade. I cannot accept to ruin my own person because I don't know what I could replace it with or if I could ever replace it.

That is why I'm sitting nailed on this seat without taking my seatbelt off although the necessity of keeping it tight has passed for more than one hour. The flight from Singapore to Sidney lasts for eight hours. Most passengers are sleeping, only the airhost passes through the seats by every now and then checking her sector. Only a slight, intermittent noise can be heard, coming from the engines of the plane.

It is strange that all these happen to me in this flight, but it is for the first time when I am honest to myself, when I am trying to find myself as a human being and not as a businessman who is just making business and nothing more.

The clouds vanished leaving the ocean still dark to reveal its face. I don't know why, but I have always loved the Ocean.

I thought of it as a parent of mine, which it is. In reality, it is the parent of all the creatures that live or ever lived on this planet, but I have always considered the mountains as challenge, just like a partner of opposite sex that you would like to know. I'm thinking again of Christine's beautiful eyes in which I lost myself. I know I need these eyes. I'm aware that Irene's eyes belong to the past and Christine's to the present, or even to the future.

I don't know why I don't have the strength to loosen my seatbelt and walk to the business class. Do I have such little courage? Or maybe Irene is still alive in the present of my soul, so profoundly that my past, which belongs entirely to her and which I cannot disown, cannot accept Christine. OK, Sorin. Christine may be just an incident somewhere in an airport full of flowers and garlands, somewhere in Singapore, and it would be much easier to drive Christine away from my mine, from my conscious, then to forget Irene. What will happen? Will I accept loneliness? Will I accept another woman? And if so, then why can't I accept Christine, now, on this very moment, on this very plane? Actually this is a limit situation: I cannot create an empty space in my past, which makes me create, in the present, an empty space in my future through loneliness. Both opportunities fight on the neutral land of the present in my soul. Only now, above the Pacific, did I come to be forced to take a decision, maybe the most difficult decision in my life, which I shouldn't play at the roulette of some business project or of some other person, but it is for me. I feel I cast the dices for my own life in the casino of my own Destiny.

Only now I realize why Irene kept telling me that she was afraid of figures and my dices will eventually represent nothing else but figures on life's play table. I understand why Irene felt that profound terror, arising from the depths of her being when she uttered the word figure. For her, in her delirium, just like for me, in this flight, the word figure means a decision of the chance, of the hazard, of the unknown. It is terrible when hazard runs my life by a mere figure given by the dices of my thoughts, wills, hopes, in the casino of my own Destiny. I feel that a boorish man hand, with dirty nails, with blunt, vigorous fingers, dirty with dust, the dust which our body is built of, with a callous palm, takes the two dices that represent my past and my future. First it squeezes them in its fist, as if the hand would have like to keep the two dices for itself, as if that moment had been an eternity for the hand, then the blunt, big fingers loosen, allowing me to see the two dices of my Destiny. The hand shakes them, shakes them, shakes them so that they are better cast, so that there is no doubt about the fact that this is nothing else but chance, and eventually casts them on a table covered with dark green velvet. My future and my past roll on the table, cast by that impersonal hand.

Eventually, they will show a figure, a date, a moment. That will be the moment of decision, the moment when the decision that I take will mark my Destiny. That's life. I feel that my past weighed too heavy in my balance so it left no room for my future. I feel that I will never be able to disown it because it expresses me as a human being, because there can be no other Sorin. I cannot imagine another Sorin, except for the one who is with Irene. Why should Sorin be with Christine? I wonder if my past could become a little part of the future, so that I can still be Sorin. Could Christine accept my past, could she accept Irene? Only if she does so, she will be able to accept me. I'm talking about a future with Christine and we don't even know each other. Maybe Christine is married, maybe there is a husband and children waiting for her when she gets home, maybe getting involved with me is the last thing in her mind. We haven't even discussed this yet. I'm so crazy. After all, Christine could be a symbol of the future, of its uncertainty, a symbol of the mystery, while Irene is a symbol of the past, of what I am, a symbol of the moments we've shared together and belong to us, of the moments I will never forget. Christine, as a symbol, can have any name, no matter what that might be. She is a woman as a symbol, the woman who could help me get rid of loneliness, while Irene is the woman who offers me the loneliness. I feel that I'm unable to make a decision, that my free will wouldn't work, that the dices of my Destiny should be cast again and again, so that the Great Time catch them when they are cast and make that moment eternal, because I don't want to believe in figures and dates and rules and decisions any longer. Maybe it would be best if I invited Christine to the Mall Tower. Maybe she would accept my invitation. I have wanted to visit Melbourne for a long time, especially the Mall Tower or the old general, as Irene would call it. Maybe the old general will advise me and help me make a decision, so that my Destiny does not become tributary to that rough hand that casts the dices, which will show me the Way that I would have to follow in this illusory existence with unpredictable happenings of the future, where everything seems so accidental that the most stiff laws of the Universe would almost shake if they didn't know that there is nothing accidental in reality, so much the more in our illusory reality. How could a woman named Christine or somehow else could understand me knowing that my past, to a large extent, will never belong to her, that my past is not cold yet, that it is so hot that it could boil the present and set the future on fire. How would such a woman react, a woman that I would choose only for driving away my loneliness knowing that my past is still an active volcano that splashes with lava my thoughts, feeling, love, in a word the relations that one day we might have? Would she have enough strength to fight against the lava that would set our feeling on fire, could she chase away the volcanic dust of my past, which would bury our love under tons of such lava? I cannot accept loneliness. I've been alone for so many years that maybe I forgot how it is to be with another person. Nevertheless an instinct, as primordially as the Ocean's, tells me to run away from loneliness, to hide from it somewhere in the arms of a woman who, one day, could live me, who would chase away the tons of volcanic dust deposited on my feelings and my thoughts, who one day would put out the lava of my past by its loving eyes, which would assure me that I'm no longer a homeless of feelings, of love, wrapped up in the veil of loneliness, that I have a place of mine where I can live and feel where I would never have to pay a rent to my feelings, where I would never be alone any more. That place will be in a small, but so large for me, part of her heart. I feel that I cannot talk just to myself any longer. I don't want the eternal dialogue of the deaf-mute people where I, a prosperous businessman, only get professional, well formed phrases and words. I don't want to buy love for money because I know such thing is not possible and I don't want to lie in order to buy feelings either, because

however hard I tried to keep the lie in a permanent trance, it would turn into delirium and eventually into madness. I don't want to spend my life as a madman who, in spite of its wealth, will always try to find the philosopher's stone, running away from loneliness, from its cold and awful tentacles.

Sometimes I feel like shouting, yes, crying out at the top of my voice: "You, miserable fate!!!" Why did Irene have to get this schizophrenia, why her, my wife? I would give all me money, everything I have achieved in more than fifteen years, I would give all this Irene recovered. I understand now why Irene told me once, in a clear night when we were lying in a park near Columbia University, that she wouldn't have liked to become very rich, than money meant nothing to her. I understand now how stupid I was the next morning when we woke up and realized that our money, papers and all our things had disappeared and I sort of reproached Irene with the words she had said that she wouldn't like to be rich. On that morning I wished she told me that she would like to be rolling in wealth, that we could eat because we were starving, that we could put our shoes on because they had been stolen. Irene stuck to her opinion. She fought to the last moment, she didn't give up no matter what, facing even the dean and eventually she burst into tears, but those tears would not have revealed at all her capitulation, there were tears of revolt. I couldn't understand her at that time; but I do now! I'm so sorry I didn't understand her then. I still love Irene. Not a single day goes by that I don't think about her.

Sometimes I feel that my life cannot consist only in thoughts any longer, I feel that I need the present and the future as well, that I can no longer live only in the past, that the cosmic law itself, which guides our steps on the way of life, tells me that the past is neither present nor future and I continue to grant to the past the attributes of the future and of the present I will end by rejecting even the illusory and imaginary meaning of life which is given to you by the future in the present by Uncertainty, Chance and Prediction, whether the Free Will accepts the Sacred and Profane or not.

I'm aware that what I do now is to reject precisely what would give my life a meaning, in case I will decide to grant to my past both my present and my future. It would mean that I am no longer fighting for anything, to consider Chance as something inexistent or, anyway, as something I have known for a long time, just like Prediction, let alone Uncertainty.

I know my past. If my future will remain Irene, the meaning of my life will consist in the past which will irremediably take me to madness, if not to suicide because the Great Contemplation offered us, in this spiritual-dimensional level, those temporal dimensions: past, present and future. However hard we might try to undermine them, even by lying to ourselves, we shall never succeed in doing this because then we would only have three choices. The first would be not to live our life, to chase away the moments offered by the Great Contemplation, as time of our life, to the waste box of the existence of this illusion that we live from the moment we are born till the moment we die. The second alternative would be to go crazy, or if not, to accept abnormality as something natural. And a third alternative would be to kill ourselves. No matter what alternative we choose, no matter how much we might lie to our selves intentionally, we will never, but never, get rid of the mark that we are taking with us anyplace, in all the spiritual levels we are passing through, namely the one of refusing the great good that God, by the Great Contemplation made us, giving us the freedom to choose. By refusing the future, we refuse the Free Will itself given by God for our freedom.

No matter how much we might suffer in the destiny that we were given in this world, we will have to accept all the three dimensions of time because, even if for us future means Uncertainty, Prediction and Chance, somewhere in the depths of

the Great Contemplation, somewhere in the depths of the of the Original Thought everything is known and everything has a Purpose.

The Chance exists only for us, for this spiritual-dimensional level as a way of expressing the Free Will together with the Prediction and Uncertainty, in a word, the Unknown. All the three parts belong to the Unknown, which is the foundation stone of the Free Will. I feel terrified thinking how the world would look like if the Unknown, with its mystery and poetry, didn't exist, how the world would look like if we knew everything.

What if we knew the Future? Then the Future would become Past and the Present would disappear because there would be no border between Present and Future. Thus, the Moment would not exist either, because it couldn't be measured according to the passing of time, from the past, through the present and to the future, or the other way around, from the future, through the present and to the past, as most processes in our environment, which exists as a result of the Illusion of our existence. What exactly flows from the past to the future, except for the thoughts, hopes, wishes? Maybe our Illusion of existing, of going towards the Future, towards the mysterious Future, will reduce itself to our great Unknown, who created the dimensions of Time itself, creating the Future, the Past, and last but not least the Motion and the Evolution, even though they exist only as Illusion just like the environment.

The Movement could never exist without the three temporal dimensions because no object or body could move in a past unless this past has a present and a future, just like it couldn't be realized just in **one** present unless there is a future, and the movement could not exist in the future unless the existence of past and present. All the three temporal dimensions could not exist if one of them didn't exist, just like the Unknown could not exist without the Known in the Great Contemplation of the Great Creator of the Universe. The future belongs to the Unknown, the Past belongs to the Known and the Present to the Moment, which, in its turn, becomes the frontier between the Unknown and the Known, between Incertitude and Certitude.

However strange it may seem, the Illusion of our existence as people, the Illusion that we live ever since we are born until we die and that is based on movement, on transformation, on evolution, could not exist if it hadn't been for the great mysterious Unknown. Without the Unknown, movement, speed, time, and of course space, regardless of how many dimensions, could not exist either. I often wonder how I could measure the Moment. I wonder whether a Moment is a second, an hour, a year or an eternity. We all agree that there is infinite and that it is endless. An infinite space is an endless space; an infinite time is an endless time. Then time and space can be reduced to the Absurd and their measurement could not be accepted, so we cannot accept that the Moment is ephemeral either.

The Moment itself is as infinite as time and space. The Moment exists in the Illusion of our life because the Unknown exists within the depths of this spiritual and dimensional level and it becomes Known through the Moment. The Future that becomes Past through the Moment. In the illusion that we live, we don't know for sure that a Moment lasts just for a moment or a second and that's all, because we don't know how wide this frontier is, the frontier between Future and Past, which we call Present and which doesn't even actually exist, except in the Illusion that we live. We should each think of the present that we live, does it last a second, a fraction of a second, a billionth of a second? What if everything that is crossing my mind right now comes from the Future and almost instantaneously belongs to the past, and this frontier of the Present is nothing but a reference? We are lying under this curse that our purest feelings, such as love, kindness, hope, happiness, self-accomplishment, belong and are

owed to the Unknown, just like time, speed, movement, space, ourselves. The Unknown is the one that grants us the opportunity of owing the Free Will, but just up to its souls. Not higher. Why not? Because higher there is the infinite and, of course, the Absolute. Then, in case we could pass the Unknown, we would go beyond the Human Condition, the one of never getting to know the Truth, the Absolute or the Absurd, let alone the Great Purpose we were created for, because at the level of universal infinity to create means to start an ordinary process at a well defined time. At the level of the Universe, any dimension receives an infinite connotation. So it happens with time and space, which we know very well, in this illusory existence of ours. Their infinity proves that they are never ending and without beginning and we cannot talk about a Beginning or an End of the Great Contemplation or of our spiritual-dimensional level. If we cannot talk about Creation, it means that we do not exist, it means that the Great Contemplation of the Great Creator does not send forth the Original Thought as long as to send forth means movement and movement means finite spaces and times. In this case, we cannot talk of the endlessness of the Universe either, as long as endlessness also means a spatial and temporal measure. Then we could state that there is no such thing as a poor Illusion either. Is it really necessary that it have an End? Are the spatial-temporal beginning and the spatial-temporal end just some notions belonging to the Infinite, but also to the Absurd and to the Knowledge?

The Great Contemplation is not tributary to any time or space, not even to the Infinite, Absurd or Knowledge. The Knowledge created the Unknown within our spiritual-dimensional space in order to create the Illusion of our life with all its spiritual and temporal characteristics. The Great Contemplation is the Original Thought which embodies the dimensional structuralizing of the logic and geometries of the Knowledge, the Absurd and the Infinite that, in their turn, determine everything that can be considered as dimension in the Universe, such as time, space and others that we cannot state but we know that they exist to the infinite, precisely because the Infinite exists and each element has a different multiplication not only as an element and dimension, but also as essence. Beside time and space, which are dimensions, there can be other notions just like them, which would express another sort of dimensions. All these within a Universe where **everything is determined and nothing is created, where there is no beginning and no end, where there is just God and His Great Contemplation**. Then what is this Great Purpose that we exist for? Can this Great Creator of the Universe, or God, as most people call it, the one who determined the existence of the Great Contemplation by his existence, the one who determined the Original Thought of the Great Contemplation by his existence, have a Saga so that we exist? I don't think so, because the Great Creator of the Universe cannot compete with anyone and anything in order to determine the existence of a purpose. He cannot have necessities or needs in order to have a purpose and to benefit by the advantages of the action accomplished with a certain purpose. All these are impossible. The Great Creator of the Universe does not have a certain purpose because He doesn't have a **competitor**. We cannot talk of two Great Creators of the Universe if, by the absolute meaning of the Universe, we understand everything that exists, the infinite of the dimensionality notions, others than space and time, the infinite of the spiritual and dimensional levels, everything that cannot even be conceived. The Great Creator of the Universe determined the existence of the Universe with no beginning and no end. The notion of Creator itself does only exist within our concept as something that gives birth, that creates, because God or the Great Creator of the Universe did not give birth to this Universe, but He determined it, determines it and He will determine it to exist through the Great Contemplation of His Original Thought. So He is really the Great Creator of the Universe, even though we cannot imagine a creation without a beginning or an end,

just like we cannot imagine the Infinite.

We cannot imagine other dimensional notions except for those of space and time, because we are "programmed" by our five senses to imagine them, but it does not mean that they actually do not exist. A lot of people will be disposed to think that this trinity: God or the Great Creator of the Universe, the Great Contemplation and the Original Thought are one and the same Person. Nothing could be more wrong. Each of them is a person, different from the other. The Great Creator of the Universe determines the Great Contemplation, which in its turn determines the Original Thought. The Great Creator of the Universe Contemplates the Original Thought. It does not mean that one of those three persons has priority over the others in the existence. No, and this is not because the time does not pass at the level of the Infinite. It passes only when it exists here, within our existence. The Unknown that determines the Future, which, in its turn, determines the Past by the Frontier of the Present. It might seem strange, but just like in our spiritual-dimensional level there is past, present and future, in other level there can be a billion of such temporal notions, instead of three. This means that the notion of Known that belongs to the past and the one of Unknown that belongs to the future can be multiplied in a billion of other notions. From this spiritual and dimensional level, my mind cannot even imagine how a superior level would look like, a level in which all these notions would multiply to a billion. A level where, beside knowledge and unknowledge we would have billions of other notions that we cannot conceive. But there is Time there, although the notions of beginning and end cannot be the same like in our spiritual-dimensional level because the future and the past have a billion of other similar notions. Then the beginning also have a billion of other similar notions but yet different, just like the end has a billion of other similar notions but yet different. Nevertheless, how would a spiritual-dimensional level with a billion of billions of billions of dimensions and different dimensional notions look like? There is Time within these levels although this Time passes by in a completely different manner. There is movement and there are different notions for the Known and the Unknown. This time, let's imagine that the notion of Time itself also has other billions of different notions, which we cannot even express. I'm not talking about future and past, of dimensional notions of time, but of the temporal notions themselves, different from one another. This would lead to other notions about movement and space. But what if the Temporal notions would compete with other billions and billions of notions that are not related to time or space? Then what? What if all these notions would give birth to a single Notion of the Existence, which, in its turn, would also compete with billions and billions of other Notions, this time not of the existence but distinct notions? Would we get to the concept of Personalization? If the Personalization, as a Notion, were multiplied to the Infinite, wouldn't it determine the Person, which means the Original Thought that is an determinant outcome of the Great Contemplation over the Person, the Infinite, the Personalization as Notion, the Personalization, the Notion, the Notion of the Existence, the billions and billions of spiritual-dimensional levels of the Great Creator of the Universe or God?

The Great Contemplation, God's Contemplation, determines the Person or the Original Thought, with no reference to time or space, to finite or infinite, with no beginning or end. Even the notion of always, of "for ever", is a notion that intrinsically reflects the temporality, although we should not think of this notion as what it represents, but rather as something that will always be producing itself. Even this **always** reflects temporality. It is very difficult to find a notion that can represent the period but, at the same time, a notion that would not last at all.

The Original Thought, or the Person, is determined by the multiplication to the infinite of the Personalization as Notion. The Personalization as Notion is the outcome

of billions and billions of spiritual-dimensional levels that follow one another reaching the one-dimensional level. I wonder what is below this one-dimensional level? Is there the lowest spiritual-dimensional level also preceded by another level? Of course it is preceded by another level, namely by a level with spiritual-dimensional dimensions with contrary characteristics to those we live in. Just like in the case of algebra, where zero precedes one, taken as frontier, and followed by minus one. From that frontier on, a new evolutionary cycle begins, reaching to the infinite, towards the Great Contemplation and God. I admit that the term "begins" is incorrect as long as it represents the period of time, but I shall have to make an exception from the so-called temporal dimension. Why do we need the Person and why isn't the Great Contemplation and God enough? Why isn't God enough and why do we need the Great Contemplation and God? "Necessary", "to need" is not the issue within this context and we shall not accept the Great Contemplation and the Person as a concept of sine qua non notion. What we say is that:

"God contemplated and the Person ordered the Personalization, which, in its turn, determined the Notion, which, in its turn, determined the State Notion and everything that tends towards a new beginning to the Infinite." Our spiritual-dimensional level belongs to the Existential State Notion.

At large, these are the asymptotic ideals of the Evolution, although the word Ideal should not be considered with its proper meaning but only figuratively, because at an Infinite Level of Notions, the Evolution receives completely different connotations from the spatial-temporal connotations of beginning, accomplishment, fulfillment, happening. The previous statement would be much more concrete like this: "**God Contemplated and the Person ordered the Evolution.**"

I wish I flew continuously, never to land on any airport, to think, towards God, towards the Universe, towards Evolution. Oh, God, the God of the Universe, please give me my inner peace again, let me become indifferent like some people who don't care about what's happening to their lives; I wish I became a vagabond, a vagabond of my own destiny. To sleep wherever I get to, to eat whatever I get to. I can feel my bowels rumble, I feel dizzy and I spend the money that I receive out of pity as I beg at the corner of the street on the most stinking brandy. How happy such vagabond must be, not caring about tomorrow, about business or other things. A vagabond who despises everything, including love, feelings, who never in his life loved anything else but a dog that sleeps next to him on an entrance hall, trembling with cold in a frosty American winter. A vagabond for whom the warm look of the dog that became his life companion means everything, for whom all the other dirty, proud, despising looks are worthless. All these because him, the vagabond, had a special philosophy of life, with regard to those people who were giving him despising looks. Why? Because the Vagabond was saddened by the rich, fat and proud people, because these people were crushed by prejudices, by thoughts, by fears. They were the real alienates, not the Vagabond who was trembling with cold next to his dog in some entrance hall on Fifth Avenue where some passer-by would contemptuously drop him a penny, just to be selfimportant. I wish I became that Vagabond, to sleep wherever I get to, to drink stinking brandy, to eat occasionally and no one to ask me anything, not even to respect a certain behavior or language of decency, or to smile at me professionally or show me mountains of kindness. I feel that some day I shall go crazy of so much kindness and attention. I feel like I'm an object exhibited in a showcase that, instead of accomplishing the purpose for which it had been created, lies there still to be admired by everyone, waiting for the shop assistant to replace it with another object, some day. Waiting until, at last, the hairy and trodden hands of the shop assistant would take it away from the showcase.

My life is the same, a continuous waiting, in order to be lived. I don't know why, but I'm always under the impression that, instead of living my life, my destiny is to wait somewhere in the waiting room of life. Isn't the destiny of the object in the showcase cruel? To lie there in the showcase while it is in fashion, and then to be thrown away because its time wore and something else is in fashion. Isn't it sad that precisely the object that had been admired by lots of people is the one whose destiny was to belong not even one man? Isn't it a cruel fate to live in the waiting room of life until you die? To be envied and sapped by others? To become an ideal for other people, while you want to become that Vagabond? I wish people called me to account, just like that Vagabond, chase me away from the hall in which I had slept for one or two nights, I wish I had to find another shelter, another place to sleep. I wish I could refuse to sleep in the shelters of the municipality and to take some trolley, which I had stolen from some supermarket, to the Salvation Army for food and cloths. I wish I could become that beggar on the Fifth Avenue whom I would see every morning begging, and in the evening sleeping drunk, never in the same place. I can't forget what he told me once, when I stopped and gave him a hundred dollars. I thought he would thank me and he would smile. I was wrong. When I asked him why doesn't he go to the Salvation Army, he told me:

"That's a place for guys like you. Not for me. Not for me."

"I could help you with a job", I told him eventually. "I could pay you the rent to a one bedroom, if you'd like to."

He looked at me just like a shrink looks at a madman and then he told me in a spiteful voice:

"Don't you think that I could have all these if I wanted to? But you think I want these? You think I want to become like you? Did you ever think if you really want to be what you are? I would want to become what you are, not for the world. You can leave that money down here, if you want to. If you don't, you can take them away as soon as possible because people will start to sidestep when they see this hundred bill next to their change."

I can't say that I didn't get angry with the Vagabond at that time. I wanted to grab him, as he was lying there, being proud, and fetch him a blow, but at the last moment I changed my mind. I admit I was ashamed by the people passing by. I couldn't accept the fact that a wretch man was mocking at me, a guy with more millions of dollars in the bank than the change he had in his dirty, worn hat. To be honest, all day long I felt like coming down from the fifty-ninth floor of the building where my company had some offices and show him who Sorin Cerin was. All these happened more ten years ago. What I can say is that in the past years I haven't seen the Vagabond any more. I have never looked for him ever since. Why not? I don't know. Out of pride, maybe, out of self-respect. I don't think so. Maybe I, the multimillionaire, was envious, jealous of the Vagabond. Maybe so, but as I was proud and arrogant I couldn't admit it. I preferred to lie to myself, to live a reality created by myself, after Irene had gone completely mentally disordered. Although it was some kind of pseudo-reality, I could never define it differently, because lying to myself became some sort of reason to exist, because if I hadn't played dirty with my own life, maybe I would have lost my mind. This was I thought until not so long ago and, for fear I might lose my senses, I accepted to play my own life in a strange game: me against myself. What was against me has won for a long time and then I won. What was next? It's simple. One day, I have looked for the Vagabond all over the Manhattan, Brooklyn, Fifth Avenue, Grand Central Park, and Well Street to the north side, in Harlem. I was looking for him, just to tell him that he was so right then, on the Fifth Avenue. I was not my business to offer him a job or a one bedroom, or to give him one hundred dollars, when everybody else gave him five,

ten or twenty five cents. Rarely, some hungry or compassionate guy would give him one dollar or even five, but not one hundred. I wanted to ask him to forgive me for the offence of giving him one hundred dollars. I would have done anything to have his forgiveness, but it wasn't meant to be. The Vagabond had died several years ago. I didn't even know it. I had envied a dead man for years. I heard it accidentally. I remember how afraid I was that he wouldn't remember me, how I was thinking of telling him that I was that wretched guy that had offended him with the one hundred bill instead of giving him a quarter. I remember that I had held a quarter in my hand all day long hoping that, eventually, I would find the true winner: the Vagabond. In the evening I gave the quarter to another Vagabond. Only that day, while I was looking for him in Manhattan, I understood that **he was a real object and I was the object to be exhibited in a showcase.** Only then I realized how wrong are most people when their single purpose in life is to become famous, rich, in other words objects in the showcase, without realizing that life should be lived intensively, that time goes by, and the object will be thrown away from the showcase directly to the garbage. All those people know nothing about how terrible it is to live in a showcase, in this waiting room of life, where the meaning of your life is to become admired by the others without realizing that you are ephemeral yourself and you will fade away together with the fashion, and all the eyes that admired you and looked at you with rapture are now devouring another object that is exhibited in the showcase in your place, because your time has passed and you died. Then what is this fame, celebrity or richness that turns us into a showcase object good for? Even if you would become famous by what you create in your life, by an eternal piece of work, if you are an object in the showcase during your life, it is useless to live your life, once it lives you in the waiting room of life. This is the saddest thing. The Vagabond was an accomplished man, a powerful man because he had the courage to become a vagabond, a courage that lacks to many of us, let's admit it.

The day is breaking. Somewhere underneath us I can see a nail-long ship. I can see even the white wake that it leaves behind, in the Pacific. In a few hours we shall land in Australia, in full autumn. How strange! It was the end of April; we left Amsterdam in the spring, when the trees were in blossom and we arrive in Sidney in autumn, when the rusty leaves are falling down easily gliding in order to give birth to another memory of a past summer. Something urges me to go to Christine and tell her:

"Don't you find it strange to go from one season to another in just a few hours? Two seasons, spring and winter, which are so frosty?"

I would like to know her answer. I would not expect her to answer me in a wellworn way like:

"Yes, I find it strange".

Then what? Maybe something like:

"No, because we bring spring with us, in full autumn".

Such an answer would mean much more to me.

What if, somewhere in New York, a husband and a lot of children are waiting for Christine to return? Oh, God, I'm so crazy! I know nothing about her and I'm thinking of her as if I knew her for ages, as if we knew each other for years and a feeling of love was taking shape. How strange this happening is! To meet a woman that you dreamt about a few hours ago, to know nothing about her, to feel like you had known her for a very long time, to feel like a you had fallen in love since the beginning of time. Something that keeps you from going to see her although she invited you. Then, like a shield, to try to protect yourself from the unknown, from emotions, from happening itself, which seems odd and out of its place, from your lack of courage, eventually, to protect yourself by philosophizing.

I admit that I liked philosophy ever since I was a student. I often regretted the fact

that I hadn't attended the Faculty of Philosophy and I applied for the history of art. The philosophy within the history of art was not enough for me and thus, instead of studying the Renaissance artists or the antiquity ones, I buried myself in all kinds of philosophical lectures. Eventually, I got really obsessed with this subject. I have always enjoyed reading the other authors and it never crossed my mind to create my own philosophy, as I did in this plane. As far as I can see, my past with Irene and a prospective future with Christine push me into philosophizing, but it is even stranger that my philosophy is not about the two women, nor in relation with them, but about the self-alienation, self-rediscovery that led me to the origin of the existence, to the meaning of the existence, to the Universe, the Great Contemplation, the Original Thought or the Person and to the Great Creator of the Universe, which is God. Without having this intention, I created a philosophy that will remain in this plane, in a past somewhere above the Pacific. A philosophy that will remain mine, and no one will ever hear it or study it. I shall name it **Contemplationism**. Why? Of course, this name comes from God's Great Contemplation. Thus, the Contemplationism keeps me stuck on a chair of a present that may not even exist, on a chair between the past that belongs to Irene and a future of uncertainty, concern and anxiety, which may belong to Christine. I don't know why I name my philosophy Contemplationism as long as no one will ever know about it, just because I have always hated to display my thoughts, my concerns and my dreams. Until this flight over the Pacific, I had no philosophy of mine, but one that I had borrowed from others. A little bit from this theory, a little bit from that theory. I would be lying if I said that I never asked myself where we come from and where we are going, who is God or how large the Universe is or all kinds of such questions.

When I was a child I had a certain way of seeing the world, another philosophy. I was convinced that I knew everything, that there was no secret within my soul. I knew that God made everything and it was enough for me. I wanted to meet the Holly Virgin or Jesus Christ, just like many other children who, through their detailed stories, described such appearances. I often thought of Paradise and I didn't imagine it with naked women, as I used to see it when I was a teenager, or with rivers of milk and honey. For me, Paradise was a field with plenty of grass and with a colt that I wanted from the bottom of my heart and whose owner had put me off with fine promises about donating it to me in exchange for different services that I was to provide for him. The owner of the colt was a fifty years old farmer fond of the bottle. He had a farm not far from our house in Mc. Kinney, Texas, a place located somewhere north from Dallas, on the road to Oklahoma and which is now almost merged with Dallas. On that time, whenever someone entered Mc Kinney, he could notice a plate with the name of the locality and the number of inhabitants: for thousand three hundred seventy-one. When we moved from Mc Kinney, the place got to five thousand two hundred thirty-three inhabitants. Within a few years it went through a fulminating growth, as the mayor stated. He never could find cloths to fit him and he sold a piece of land in the center of the locality, which belonged to the Mayoralty, on the cheap, to a tailor from Dallas in order to open a local workshop. The mayor was the fattest man I had ever seen. He could hardly walk, but he was very persuasive and he could move to tears the few old ladies in the committee, who decided on who is the winner in the election campaign. Nevertheless, I could never understand why the mayor was the only candidate, just like I could never understand why I loved that colt so much. Maybe because it was black and all black horses in the stories embodied negative characters and the white ones embodied positive characters. I had this tendency of accepting the negative characters, which all the other kids would hate. Paradoxically, I felt pity for them, they aroused my compassion. Maybe this too, but especially because I wanted to be different from the

crowd. I never accepted to be a mere gearing within an engine nor to smile or laugh when everybody else does so. I couldn't stand this standardization within the crowd. If my friend were fantasizing about white horses, as white as possible, I definitively hated white horses and wanted the black ones. Once again I had a reason to want a black horse and a colt was all the more suitable within my soul. I shall never forget that year when, at the risk of fighting with my family, I would disappear from home all day long in order to go see that colt. Back then, I didn't exactly know why, because I hadn't asked myself why I named it Paradise. Now I know. For one year, I performed all kinds of services for that farmer who was addicted to drinking, just to let me stay with Paradise, which became fond of me. Whenever I tried to ride it, it would throw me down. The farmer promised me that he would give Paradise to me provided that I brought him a considerable amount of whisky every day. Not a day passed by without me providing him the drink and he would become nervous and agitated when seeing it. At the beginning I thought it would be much cheaper this way, but in time I realized that it became much more expensive. Shortly, I spent the entire amount from my tin moneybox, which I hid under a brick of the chimney in the garret. It was the money I saved within about two years. A dollar or some change from my parents for good behavior. It was one hundred thirteen dollar and twenty-seven cents, including the two reddish one-cent coins. Seeing that I was out of money and the farmer still wanted his drink, I became more and more agitated and I started to ask my parents for more and more money, which they noticed and became suspicious. I would always come with a well-fabricated lie when they asked me about the money. I felt I loved Paradise with all my heart, that my life would be meaningless without it.

When I stopped giving him his drink, the farmer completely provided me from seeing Paradise. I was broken-hearted. I shall never forget that day when, looking at my knapsack, the farmer realized that I hadn't brought him anything. It was noon or even past twelve o'clock. That day I was late trying to convince my parents to give me money. The farmer looked at me like a cornered beast. His body was shaking. It was for the first and last time when I saw him sober. He scowled me away with a sadistic look full of hatred, threatening to kill Paradise as soon as possible. I returned home crying. All kinds of things crossed my mind those moments. The possibility of stealing Paradise, of stealing money from my parents, to take my father's gun and threaten the farmer and other such things that would help me get Paradise. I was convinced that it was worth to declare open war to the farmer. Eventually I decided to steal Paradise. I wanted to have my own Paradise, at any costs, even if I had to steal it, because it became my only Paradise and my only vision of Paradise. If someone had asked me how do Hell and Paradise look like, I would definitively said that the farmer is Hell and my colt is Paradise. I could not accept the Paradise to be swallowed by Hell, to be incarcerated and killed by Hell. Thus, I decided to kidnap my own paradise from the arms of Hell. On that day, I went home as if nothing had happened. My parents found my behavior suspicious, but they probably thought that I came to my senses. I knew that they wouldn't accept the colt because they were afraid I might get hurt when riding it or even worse, that I would go for a ride on the highway, which could be fatal. They remained inflexible in their decision in spite of all my hysterias in trying to convince them. I knew that if I brought the subject about Paradise, it all would have ended in the most diplomatic terms: Of course, it is wonderful to have a colt, but not now, you are too young to have such an animal. Do you want to hurt yourself? And so on, words that I knew before they were uttered. I was seven years old. I had just turned seven a few days before this event. I made a plan of which I thought all after-noon long. As soon as the dark fell, I went to bed without the eternal fuss that I used to put on every night when my parents told me that I should have turned in hours ago. I can still hear my

mother saying: "I'm afraid Sorin might be ill. Doesn't he act strange? Sorin is somehow 'too quite'".

She was right about me acting "too quite" but it was not because I was ill or because I had decided over night to cut it over with the exuberance, but because shortly after that I was to sneak out through the window and go to the farmer's stable to steal Paradise, which, in my opinion, belonged to me. I imagined I was a redeeming cowboy who would rage with Paradise the entire prairie sharing justice all around. I put on a cowboy hat, which I think it was as big as me, and I took two toy pistols. This was my cowboy suit when I used to play with other children. After it turned dark, I opened the window and I jumped in the yard. In less than one hour I was with Paradise. Although the farmer had two dogs, neither of them barked because they knew me. At the age of seven my life philosophy was called: Paradise colt. Shortly after, I was running beside Paradise surrendered by endless cornfields. It was a starry night. I asked Paradise if someday he would have wings to fly with me to the stars. He answered with a slight neighing. Soon, I felt drowsy. I fell asleep next to Paradise in the cornfield. I remember how happy I was when the dawn broke. Maybe it was the happiest morning in my entire life. Paradise had slept on his belly next to me. When I woke up, he started to lick me face. It was a sign of love. The police eventually found us twenty miles from Oklahoma, after three days. I had almost lost my consciousness because of the starvation. Although I had been starving I didn't want to separate from Paradise so there was no way I would have returned home. Eventually Paradise was really offered to me after I told the police how I spent all my money on the farmer's drink.

How different the Paradise is depending on age. Long ago, my Paradise was a colt. In time, this Paradise changed, just like the philosophy about the world, about life. At the beginning I knew for sure that I was living on the planet because the stork brought me; in time, the stork turned into sexual contact then into a philosophy of the chance, and finally I reached the conclusion that nothing happens by chance but it is due to the Great Contemplation, God and Person. I named this philosophy Contemplationism and, at present, I am its only supporter and of course I'll be the last one, as long as I don't share it with anyone. I don't intend to write it in a journal or to publish it. It was born in my mind and it will die in my mind. I wonder how many philosophies were born in this way during the existence of humanity? How many great philosophers remained just some illustrious anonymous persons? And how many great writers and artists? Why? The destiny of humanity would have been different if some of those people would have put their ideas into practice. I don't know which complex, of inferiority or selfishness, stops me from publishing my thoughts. Maybe they are not interesting at all. What if they are? I don't think so. If, yet, they were interesting, this is my business. Maybe many philosophers started to philosophize during such moments of maximum psychical intensity, when they had to choose between two or several ways. Who knows?

I wonder how would humanity look like without philosophy? Would it be the same? It is like I would state that humanity could exist without thinking. It would definitely not be the same. **If religion is a necessity for man, the philosophy is man himself.** Ever since we are born, until we die, we philosophize, day by day, hour by hour. Whether we realize it or not. A dialogue between two persons, however curt it might be and however meaningless, it is philosophy. Each word that we utter is philosophy. Even when we curse or we pray in a church. Any thought of ours is philosophy. Each of us is a philosopher even if we are not known by humanity. Each word contains a philosophy. I was as surprised as possible when I took a word from the dictionary and I started to dissect its meaning, its origin, the reason for which it appeared and everything so that I realized what a large philosophical theory a word, a single mere word, can contain. Language reflects man's soul and consciousness. I

would define language as a drop of the social consciousness that belongs to a society on a certain level of its development. **If you want to understand a society, you should first study its language.** Thus, you will be able to understand both the spontaneity of the respective society and the degree of profoundness, culture, evolution, in a word, the degree of civilization. Language is the mantle that covers the civilization in its journey towards evolution, towards the frozen poles of knowledge, without which we could not make a single stem on the way of development. **By studying a people's language, you study its soul. It is a kind of mark of the respective people's social consciousness.** Without language you will never be able to completely understand its history or culture or its degree of civilization and so much the less its future. I think that the futurologists should not seek all kinds of external sources when thinking of the future of humanity, but they should try to study the history of its language, which are the words that come from one or several ancient languages and exist in the present as common words in the languages that form the current world civilization consisting in the national civilizations. The researchers should also know which are the words mutually used in certain languages and what they express. Why certain languages with a similar degree of civilization have certain words and others don't? Is it only because of the historical factors and because of their customs? I doubt that. The researchers should also really define the notion of word. They should not limit to a definition like: the word expresses something, or it is an expression of a piece of news or of a phenomenon and stuff like that. I agree to these, but how come the researchers don't ask themselves why the word expresses what it expresses, why does it sound like that, how was it formed, what's the connection between spirit, expression, symbol, sound and judgment? And because I am thinking of judgment and words, I can say that sometimes I thought of the creation of a new science in the future, where each word would correspond to a number but never considered by chance or according to the number of letters, as in numerology. Each word would be given a number according to very strict criteria, such as: what exactly it expresses, what is its history, what is the root of the respective word, and so on, by erudite physiologists who would confirm the percentage in which that word is used in the language of the respective civilization, the extent to which it influences the language, as a root or as common term and also other characteristics. According to the psycho-social importance of the word and to the reason for which it is used, the respective word would be assigned a number, depending not only on the number of letters, as in numerology. These numbers can be included in different mathematical operations and finally a man's psychical state would be a simple equation of a certain degree, in which certain numbers are used to actually represent the words. I only think of that as an example. Based on this, a new science could be created, a kind of psychomathematical literature, a science that in time would have its own peaks, **a science that would find the equation or the integral of a line** or, by generalizing other mathematical operations due to each sentence or literary expression, the respective numbers would represent philological theories. A poem could be written in a few mathematical operations, just like a psychical state, a delirium or other states of the human being, expressions that would be uttered or thought. Thus, this would eventually lead us to a mathematical language of thoughts. Once such a science is developed, it would have great opportunities of studying the human mind, not only through words, but also mathematically. It could be possible for mathematics, in its turn, through different formulas and equations, in a word through operations, starting from the mathematical statements initially established by researchers, to develop a science of psychology, philosophy or mathematical literature that would be much superior to the current ones, which do not have the mathematical expression. Only then we shall

understand that the mathematical philosophy will become the mother of all sciences, so first of all a science, as the philosophy is not a science at present. Maybe somewhere in the olden times it existed but, because of some disastrous evolutions of some civilizations, it turned into numerology as an empirical continuation of mathematical literature, psychology and philosophy. In such a stage, mathematics would enrich itself from the other sciences and, of course, from philosophy and, in its turn, it would considerably enrich the others. The secret with such a science of words or psychomathematical literature relies on discovering a single number that the man's soul, with its genetic code and its number of senses, would really assign to a word in a language, but of course only to a single word or to a single letter. Such a discovery cannot be made without the establishing of some accurate and reliable criteria proving that a number x belongs to only one word or letter. I think this would be one of the greatest discoveries of humanity. From that moment on, civilization would advance in another rhythm and humanity would understand how important the Science of Words or the unification of the world with the figure is.

The airhostesses began to bring breakfast in. Soon they will approach my seat. My thoughts travel from philosophies and all kinds of future sciences to Christine. Something tells me to go to her seat at business class, as soon as I finish breakfast. Who knows? Irene comes to my mind again. I remember how she would think of Sweetie as a real example of beauty, being jealous of her, of her success with the State Chief and the Bishop. I cannot take the Chimera Hunter or the Philosopher out of my mind either. I cannot forget the Princess who was making envelopes, which she would send to the Prince from the nice kingdom of Deliria.

I am thinking of Irene and then of Christine. Why Christine, whom I have just met, I don't know exactly. I cannot say that I love her or that I couldn't live without her and yet I experience some kind of strange feeling, which cannot be defined because it is not love, or compassion, or friendship, or so much the less dependence or usage to this person. Why? I have no clue and I have no intention of trying to understand why, because I might lie to myself. I had better ask myself why the State Notion gives birth to the Notion. Because an infinite of Notions as State will give birth to the Self Notion or the Pure Notion. Because all the possibilities of State Notions are within infinite and, as a whole, they will create the Pure Notion or the Notion. Then, I'm thinking of the Personalization, which is determined by the Notion. It is true, a whole of an infinity of Notions gets a certain Personalization, a certain face, let's call it sort of empiric. Well, a whole comprised of an infinite number of Personalizations, meaning faces, becomes Person, singular, next to God's Great contemplation. Very well, Sorin Cerin, Contemplationist Philosopher for himself, just for the moment, in a plane to Sidney, Australia, a plane that would bury the Contemplationist for good in its board. Once it arrives to the destination, Sorin Cerin will probably never be interested in this philosophy because just on those unique moments in his life he feels the need to philosophize and to think of himself as a philosopher. I am smiling. I am talking about myself to the third person. Maybe such a way of approaching the matter induces me a state of so-called beatitude, perhaps a screen for me to hide behind, for Sorin Cerin to hide behind. Actually I am talking to a stranger named Sorin Cerin, about him as a philosopher, knowing that he is me, but trying not to take this into consideration. Maybe Sorin Cerin, which philosophizing, is the stranger inside me, maybe I am a stranger to myself and Sorin Cerin becomes the opposite of the stranger inside me. I don't know and I don't want to know which Sorin Cerin is the real one. The one who hides himself behind the screen of the philosopher, being afraid to face life? The one who sees the other Sorin as a stranger? **Philosophy was born out of fear.** I know it for sure. Maybe the real Sorin Cerin is the one who doesn't want to philosophize, the one

who finds the Contemplationism as an absurdity that shouldn't even be considered, even though it might become one of the best philosophical theories of humanity. Why? Because one Sorin Cerin does not need philosophy and the other needs it, because both of them are fighting for supremacy. Nevertheless, they both have a common denominator, namely the idea that philosophy was born out of fear. One of them wants to face fear directly, and the other wants to use it as a screen to protect him against the future, by philosophizing. One Sorin Cerin is not interested at all in being the author of a great philosophical work, considering it sort of indecent once it is born out of fear. He would like to destroy all the philosophies of the world and to attend classes of stunt, practice, which would give more meaning to its existence than all the philosophies. Although he doesn't want to become the author of a great philosophical work, the second Sorin Cerin does not consider philosophy as indecent and moreover he thinks it is very useful. A kind of lantern in a dark cave, with whom you can discern. This Sorin Cerin will not face fear, but he will hide behind it, meditating. I don't know which of those two Sorin Cerin is me. I cannot even choose between them, because they both live inside my soul, which is why I become an unpredictable, spontaneous person. Sometimes I wish I became a parachutist but I'm afraid to fly in a plane. Just like now. Every time I become aware of the fact that I'm on a plane, I feel shivers getting me to panic. Maybe such an awareness makes me think of Irene and Christine, at the two dimensions within my soul, which, whether I want it or not, give birth to philosophy, clearing away the fear. Is it normal for me to state that there are an infinity of Notions within a whole, that these Notions determine and do not create the Personalization, in their turns, and that an infinity of other wholes determine the Person? Can we talk of a whole that would represent a system, a structure comprised of an infinity of other "smaller" wholes? Is this possible? It is, as long as "the infinities of other wholes" are merging into a single infinite, which is the Person. This would be the first possibility. There is also a second possibility, namely that we cannot talk of Notional States, of time and space, at this level. They vanish from our temporal-dimensional level where, to another dimensionality, time could become a mere dimension, a fluid that flows and nothing else. Anyway, when changing from the Existential State Notion, it loses all attributes. Thus, we are "designed" with our senses and three-dimensionality in such a way that we can only conceive infinity by relating it to the finite. For us, oneness means something **finite**. Beyond other frontiers, at the level of the Universe, of the Great Contemplation, oneness is the infinite. Thus, we can talk of "Oneness in infinite". Another question would be how could so many infinities exist in a single infinite, which is, in fact, the Person. The word "infinite" itself is improper and I have an explanation for that: Because there is no space or time at those levels. Even if we thought at the level of our five senses, we can do it, considering that there is an infinity of Personalizations within the Person and an infinity of Notions within each Personalization and an infinity of State Notions within each Notion and an infinity of Spiritual Levels within each State Notion. We can only define two State Notions: Existence and Nonexistence. But beside these ones, there are an infinite number of others. Well, how can so many infinities that define boundlessness be included in a single infinite? Very simple, actually. Once the Person is infinite, so it has no end and no beginning, it has an asymptotic function, which will never create a "space" although the word "finite" is improper. This is because the Person is not measured according to any parameter. We can state the following: **Anything that includes the infinite between its frontiers will also be infinite. Since we talk of inclusion, we can also talk of oneness within the infinite and we can talk of several stages within the infinite, which will determine one of the most troubled**

sentences, namely: "the existence of several unique stages within the infinite proves that we, in our own life, live the illusion of the finite, which determines the fact that everything we feel, know, want, in a word, our individual consciousness, namely our knowledge, will and feelings, are a great illusion because everything happens within the infinite and we think finitely."

In my opinion, a true man is not an over learned person or a philosopher or guru, but a person who takes life as it is, without asking himself thousands of questions, because he will not manage to find out much about life and even if he did, I don't think he would understand a thing. Let's imagine that one day, some tables containing the secrets of the Universe would fall down from the sky, concretely mentioning why the infinite is infinite and why we think as we do. I think that even then there would be many philosophers and scholars who would lie saying that they understand "why it is like that" and others would ask "why isn't it like that". The important thing is not what they say but the fact that none of them will understand a thing.

This is a little part of the meaning of life: **Competition**. The real wise man keeps aside, trying to live the moments of his life by cultivating the land or carrying out all kinds of routine activities because he will be the one who understand that **this Competition itself is nonsense**. He will know that everything good that has been accomplished in this world was not at all the outcome of the harsh fight for food or fame or power, because he will know that the great achievements of humanity have been made only by divine inspiration, many times secretly, or by some people who didn't even want to accomplish that. The great geniuses of humanity did not sought for food, but they received divine inspiration in their souls. They sacrificed themselves for a piece of work that didn't remember them of the advantages in life and also killed them, setting them free from this devilish world. Some day, I would like to read a novel with inner anxiety, close to human nature, and not these so-called pieces of work in which the anxiety is carefully chased to a stereotypical and boring fluency. I don't think that people's thoughts or mine can be framed in chapters or arrangements nicely inserted by some writer or another. I am thinking now of the possibility of putting these thoughts down in a novel that I would keep somewhere in a drawer of my heart. I don't think that in order to write a novel it is necessary to give certain fluency to the thoughts and concerns of your character. I mean I shouldn't think of Irene or Christine when I reflect upon philosophy. First I should finish philosophizing and then carry on with the two women. This is the way most writers would precede. They would not go back to philosophy because it wouldn't work, I mean it is not fashionable. When you, as a writer, get to write a novel for your readers, then the novel will be an artificial hybrid, something between literature and advertising. The anxiety of a character must become real, having a real fluency. In real life no one will think of a certain subject and then, after having finished it, start another. No other person would be able to read or control his struggles because he does not have a reader for his own thoughts. I would like to read novels that have not been written for readers, novels that would express not an artificial realism, but a natural, human one, as sincere and complex as possible, a realism of man thoughts not an artificial floral arrangement well directed in certain moments. It is true that not all people think of philosophy as I do now. Maybe some of them never really did it in their life, others can curse with passion. And that curse, uttered in a certain context, can be one of the greatest philosophies that non of the so-called philosophers or writers would have been capable of stating, let alone the concerns that are different from one person to another, the thoughts that are also differ just like Paradise. I am sure that a shop assistant in a supermarket will have totally different thoughts, different struggles from a catholic archbishop, for example, but they are not inferior.

This is what we should learn in our life: not to be artificial because it leads to social alienation, first of all. I'm sure that most people will think that the archbishop's thoughts and struggles are more profound, more pertinent to be taken into consideration. And this is a big mistake. Most of us tend to give preference and to believe the persons who achieved a certain social rank, and eliminate the others in this competitions. This happens because in any society there is a very injurious Prejudice that quickly leads us social alienation. We started to consume all kinds of musical works, which are in no way related to the notion of music, written by dilettantes in this domain, just because the press and advertising made them famous. Just because advertising created a fashion. But it is even more painful that these artificial works, which do not represent us and which are supported by the king of our civilization, money, are overlapping our own lives, which are hanged in a hallstand at the entrance where they are left to be forgotten like some clothes that we have bought by mistake and do not like. We rarely remember the fact that our life lies hanged in that deserted hallstand to get dusty and sometimes we wear it in some lucky, bloomy day when our artificial "daily" life would not accompany us outside on such weather. This is life in the modern society of current civilization; this is the statute of our real life in comparison to the artificial one in this civilization. This is the reason for social Alienation and Fear and, of course, for the Absurd. It is worth mentioning that the artificial life existed in parallel to the real life not only in our civilization, but also in the past civilizations. Since the first civilization took shape, this pseudo-perspective of man, namely the artificial life, also took shape. We could not speak of civilization if we didn't also speak of the parallelism of those lives. What I find most interesting is precisely this parallelism of lives. The parallelism between the real life and the artificial one gave birth to Civilization, Alienation, Fear and Absurd. Thus, we have another paradox, namely: There is no civilization without the two parallel lives of the individual, namely the real and the artificial one and the more we advance in civilization, the more alienate we shall become and our life will get more and more grotesque connotations regarding the Absurd; in our civilization's wish to advance, we shall witness its destruction. The more we shall try to develop the values of civilization, the more quickly we shall draw ourselves closer to Apocalypse. The more advanced our civilization will be, the closer it will get to suicide. The Alienation, Fear and Absurd shall reach maximum quotas. A few hours ago I was asking thinking about the Absurd as the Person resulting from God's Contemplation. Having our five senses, being helped by the consciousness that was given to us in this world, we can only approach the Person at the level of Absurd and the Personalization at the level of Paradox. Any Paradox is a regularity that has its own Personalization through the statement it represents. This does not mean that the Personalizations represent only regularities of Paradoxes or only regularities. They represent any Evolution as generalization, so a pluralism. The Absurd represents the Person as singular, the Original Thought, and the meaning of the Great Contemplation's meanings, which we shall never be able to discern. Each of our thoughts is within the Person Contemplated by God. A civilization without Absurd could not exist, as it could not exist without Alienation because it would become a perfect civilization, like the Original Thought, which is completely impossible. Thus, the Person would find itself in civilization, which cannot happen. The Civilization's way to Apocalypse and the Humanity's way to the Great Liberation. The Apocalypse will also destroy the Paradox that keeps us kneeling and shackled in the current spiritual-dimensional regularity, namely: **We need an Original Sin and a Guilt in order to become free, but the more free we are, the more we realize that we get more and more shackled because we relate ourselves to the Unknown. The more we shall try to set us free, trying to advance as civilization, the more we realize that we are heading towards death,**

suicide and Apocalypse. This is man's condition: "To have the illusion of dust, to know all his life that he is made out of dust and that he will become dust, to leave behind something built on the dust, even it is just a cross in a cemetery, as a sign that he joins the other nameless people who wanted to leave a sign suggesting that they defeated dust, a sign that they support their forerunners in creating new values of civilization in its way to human condition's self-liberation, without any one to mention that this would be accomplished through death, suicide and Apocalypse, because all these are, even in the diversity played by the Illusion of Life, nothing but some gates, which are so important that the fact of uttering them or thinking of them could represent a way towards Fear, Alienation and Blasphemy." Paradoxes, Alienation, Fear, Absurd belong to gnoseological while from the neo-ontological point of view we can accept that everything that includes the concept of Person, such as State Notions, Notions, Personalization, as a determinant of the Great Contemplation of the Great Creator of Universe or God, "existing" at a completely different level through what we understand by "to exist". It is not about another form of existence or nonexistence, but something above all these, something that cannot be uttered with the power of human mind unless we assign the totally different multiplication (for example existence and nonexistence) of some State Notions, multiplied to the infinite. As long as we approach this matter from the ontological point of view, so from the existence in the sentence, we realize that we need a term to express the ontological but not to use existence as a base. That term should be named Contemplationist Neo-ontology. Thus, the concept itself would be named Contemplationist Neo-ontology. I don't think that any particular change is necessary from the gnoseological point of view, which is the knowledge, because the knowledge itself as a theory can verge on the State Notions, being related to the contemplationist neo-ontology. I named it "contemplationist" because the ontology verges on the existence. The neo-ontology, as a concept, can become the opposite of existence but it cannot have a general image on the State Notions. **The relation between gnoseological regarding the Great Contemplation and contemplationist neo-ontological results in the Great Creator of the Universe or God. God is the origin and the name of the Universe. He is the Knowledge, the Great Contemplation and the Person, he is the absolute and the Absurd and everything that can be included in the Personalization and the Notion. He is Everything and also all the different forms of the statement. Everything that cannot even conceive, but which is even without existing, just the existence and nonexistence and the State Notions. In God there is everything that exists and that do not exist and another infinity, different from what there is and there is not. God is more than the Beginning and the End because these are within Him, being reflected also by spirits that are limited in dimension, which see their illusory existence according to the parameters of dimension that actually do not exist, did not exist and will not exist except in the nothingness of a soul who believes that he will reach God if he reaches the stars.** Only now I realize that the airhostess has served breakfast. It is on the plate coming down from the back of the chair in front of me. I didn't realize that I had received food until a woman's kind voice asked me whether I have finished eating. I answer I haven't. Probably she can notice that too. She walks away without saying a word, without reproaches or scenes, without reminding me that she had brought breakfast in for more than one hour, like in the cheap, artificial novels where writers, in their race for sensational, try to put in the mouth of their characters all kinds of lines that they would never say, for the world. **I think that one of the best novels for me would be the one in which the characters can hold a dialogue, scream, converse by saying nothing.** I am not thinking of a novel of the deaf and dumb characters but of one

that would reflect exactly the reality, the way in which a person actually lives his life. We can often see large crowds of people on the boulevards of the great cities and they seem dumb, walking quite. It is not like that at all because, **if we could hear our thoughts and concerns we would definitely go insane.** It doesn't mean that these people do not hold a dialogue in a certain way, even if they often keep quite or do not express their impressions in any way. **The real conversation of the human being is when he doesn't use the spoken Word, no matter whether he converses with himself or others through thoughts. Words often become an armor or a screen behind which most of us can hide. The society needed words, precisely to lie to itself, in its way to Alienation and Apocalypse.** I admit that we need this language, which could have become a language of thoughts and not of spoken words, a language of our concerns, of the explosion of human being towards kindness, love, happiness, on our Universal Evolution. We have lost, maybe for good, the language of thoughts, of souls, receiving in exchange the delusive language of spoken words because our history, the history of humanity proved us that our way towards happiness, love and welfare goes through Civilization. That decision sealed the humanity's fate, we were sentenced to expiate the Original Sin, as a Guilt for having chosen Civilization. Thus, the Word was born, as an instrument to seal humanity's fate sometime in a moment of choice in the dark times of history. From that moment on, our way towards Alienation, Fear, Absurd and Ignorance remained closed. From that moment on, the evolution of Civilization pushes us to choose the Original Sin, to accept the Guilt as a necessary property of Civilization and ethics deriving from it. The Sacred, Profane and Science were created from the Word. I would like to be able to write a novel of thoughts, a novel of silence, but I am not so sure I can do it because **I am tributary to Civilization, to its history, to the Sacred and Profane, to the Perfidious Word. I am looking at the large red disc of the sun, which, after having spent a whole night in the depths of the Ocean worming its cloudy heart with rays and light, it leaves, giving birth to another date in the calendar of the great love between the Sun and the Ocean, a love that created life on this planet somewhere between some forgotten dawn. A new separation means new dawn, a new rediscovery, a new evening and thus, between dawn and night and night and dawn humanity lives with its souls burdened by so much life, by poetry and philosophy, by stress and sex, by love and religion, by science and deceiving accomplishment. A road trodden by so many destinies and hopes. A road coming from a great love story, written over and over again during the forgotten histories between the Sun and the Ocean, always leading to the death of destinies in order to refresh with their souls new and new dawn and evenings without which the years could not bear days in their souls any more, but nothingness and the millenniums would be mere dead leaves carried away by the starry winds with no purpose. But what would be worse? The thing that neither the mind, nor the stars would understand, in relation to which the moments of the millenniums and the naught of the years would be some mere jokes delivered when having a glass of cheap wine. Would it be worse not to have a history? Maybe. Would it be worse not to know the notion of destiny? Maybe. Then? It would definitively be worse if we didn't know that God exists for our destinies too.**

Chapter 14

"Haven't you finished your breakfast yet?" I heard a voice that seemed familiar to me. As I was absorbed in my own thoughts, I didn't give credit to my hearing. I felt I was dreaming. I was staring to the wing of the plane that was lightly vibrating because of the atmospheric turbulences. The voice got more insistent:

"Is my presence here inconveniencing you, Mr. Sorin Cerin? I turned my head. It was Christine in flesh and blood. I couldn't believe my eyes. On one hand, I was extremely happy because she had looked for my, but on the other hand, I imagined Irene there in front of me."

"No it isn't, Chris. On the contrary. Please, sit down." Only then I noticed that my neighbor had got off in Singapore and the seat was free.

Thank you for the invitation, said Christine, and she sat next to me smiling with understood implication. A smile that I had never found in any other woman, something between joke, irony, mystery and desire, which made her even more enigmatic than she was at the beginning, when I met her in Singapore airport.

"This is not business class, in deed," I noticed.

"Maybe not, but I grew to like it here more. I can adapt very fast, Sorin, said Christine."

"I'm not that malleable when it comes to adapting, although I have traveled a lot in my life", I told her.

"Each person has its nature", said Christine, and she helped herself with a slice of kiwi from my portion. I found this gesture really charming and I smiled.

"Haven't I invited you to my seat, Sorin? Why didn't you come?"

"I would rather not answer to this question so that I won't have to lie", I said to Christine.

"Perfect. I finally met a real guy. He would rather keep quite than lying", said Christine.

"That's right, Chris, I would rather keep quite."

"Then I agree with you, Sorin. Sometimes silence can become a reliable ally in a person's life", said Christine, visibly amazed and with a shadow of sadness in her voice.

"Really?" I answered evasively, trying not to upset her.

"Maybe my presence here is inconveniencing you. I'll leave. I'll be waiting for you at my place, that is if you still want to come, Sorin, isn't it?" And she tried to stand up from the next seat. I can't describe the feeling I had on that moment, all I can say is that I grabbed her arm and I nailed against her chair. She didn't expect me to do that and neither did I. She looked at me amazed, she took a deep breath and she told me:

"So I gather you don't want me to go, Sorin?" I became that Sorin again, instead of Mr. Sorin that I was a few moments ago when our relationship was rather cold.

"No, Christine, I don't want you to go. All this time since we took off from Singapore I kept thinking at you and another person, who ..."

"Who? she interrupted me."

"Who once meant something for me. I'm talking about my wife, Irene", I told the woman.

"Oh, you're married."

"Yes, Christine. Maybe that's why I didn't come to your seat."

"You should have told me from the beginning that you are a married man instead of letting me think about you", said Christine.

"Well, I didn't realize that you would really think about me, Christine"

"I want to leave, Mr. Sorin..."

"Sorin", I continued.

"Sir", she said emphatically.

"You should know, Christine, that I'm glad that you thought about me and this means I mean something for you. All this time I thought of you as my own future, without being able to make a difference between my future and your person, Christine."

"I want to go, Sorin", said Christine visibly offended. Frankly, I didn't think that she had also thought of a possible relation with me. All these gladden me, they make me think there is a chance for my hopes. Maybe I shouldn't have told her that I was married in such a direct manner, maybe I should have prepared her a little bit, who knows. Anyway, I think it would be much better to tell her the truth about Irene. Most probably she thinks I am married guy who is met in New York, in J.F. Kennedy airport by his loving wife and a crowd of children shouting together: We couldn't wait for you to come home, daddy! What have you brought us?, and I, like a Santa Clause, careful, with a big, red bag, with no ashes traces from who knows what scaled chimneys, would tell them: "Oh, my dear children, if you were good, daddy brought each of you a book and a nice present. And I would say all these, but not before kissing each of them, on their forehead. And I would eventually take out my bag which, instead of ashes spots, would be full of airports' labels stuck on it. I feel like laughing. I can't control it and I burst into roars of laughter. This time Christine really wants to stand up but I nail her down. Maybe this way she feels flattered, courted, who knows? She looks at me as if I were a freak. Yes, I think this is the right word: Freak! Eventually, I decide to tell her the truth:

"OK, Christine. If you really want to go, suit yourself, but I want you to let me tell you a few words about my marriage."

"You are also sadistic, Sorin? You know I don't like to ..."

"I swear, she is my former wife. I haven't been with her for about thirteen years. I haven't seen her for almost two years."

"Why do you tell me all these? Do you think I care?"

"I don't know whether you care or not, Chris. All I want you to know when you think of me as a married man is that I can't ever live with my wife again because she is seriously ill and she is hospitalized in a mental sanatorium. She suffers from advanced schizophrenia. I tried to do everything I could to help her but it was in vain, there was no result."

"Then why are still married to her?" asked Christine.

"Because I took a decision once."

"A decision? What decision?" asked Christine.

"Do you really want to know?" I replied.

"Yes! I mean ... whatever, if you want to tell me, tell me, if you don't, don't", said Christine and her cheeks turned red.

"If I don't, I don't?" I replied, trying to make her feel forced to confess the reason she became interested to find out what decision I had taken some time ago.

"And yet, I would like you to tell me, Sorin", said Christine.

"OK, I will tell you this secret of mine on one condition: I would like you to tell me why are you so interested in finding it?" I asked her.

"Because, I don't know how to start ..."

"Tell me, Christine."

"Because I realized that maybe our encounter on the airport in Singapore was not

just an accident. Just like you, I have been thinking of us all the time since we took off
..."

"Of 'us', Chris?" I interrupted her.

"Maybe", she answered smiling.

"My little secret is that I didn't want to get divorced because, at a certain moment, I didn't think that I would meet another woman for whom I would feel something, at least as powerful as I felt for Irene, my former and present wife. You can call her as you want to. I don't even know if she is still my wife. Maybe she just belongs to my past. The sooner I understand this and the more sincere I am to myself, the better it will be for me. I have accepted to lie to myself, to live a parallel, different life for a long time. I would tell to myself that she would recover and some day she would come home, but it wasn't like that. I tried to help her in every possible way. What did I get? Nothing, Chris. I wanted to help her with medicines and with unconventional practices. As the situation didn't improved with medicines, I studied some practices in a lamasery in Tibet. I found a great person there, a noble soul, a Lama who had patience with me, listened to me and then taught me many practices that help me not only in my daily life, but for feeling my own Destiny, on the great way of life, heading without regrets towards death. It is important that you know how to live your life so that you never regret anything, so that everything fate might bring you, you face it with dignity without accepting any compromises that might alleviate your pain for the moment, just like pain killers, and then, after the sedative effect is gone, the pain bursts just like a volcano stirred within the depths of dust."

"Maybe those unconventional practices were not beneficial to her", said Christine, this time looking straight into my eyes. I felt that this question was not this question, but another one.

I felt that her question, her soul's question was this: "Do you still love her so much that you are trying every possible way to bring her back to you or, seeing that there is no other way of saving her, you capitulated and tried to forget her like a coward? Will you be able to love me like you loved that woman? All those words didn't have to be uttered, I felt them springing out of Christine's soul. I wished I answered her soul directly, but something was telling me that I shouldn't show that I could read a woman's thoughts. You would only achieve a temporary victory, but the fate of the entire war would remain sealed in the prejudice of the man. No woman will accept a man who could read her mind like an open book laying somewhere in a shop window at the corner of the street. An indestructible element of womanliness relies in the mystery that she can have over a man, in feeling that she is one mental step ahead him, because mental is one of the few attributes through which a woman can excel as against the man. A woman could not measure her physical strength with a man, nor other attributes that reflect the manliness. To succeed in proving a woman that you can read her soul any time day or night is equivalent to ignoring her womanliness. Eventually, I told her: "I think that those practices are beneficial to her. A mentally disturbed man fully recovered by the respective practices with my help. This is a complex problem and there is no point in discussing it now." I used that "her" instead of Irene because that was the way Christine used it. I noticed the subtle but also subversive mark through which woman names her possible rival. Even if she were sure that she would never have to face Irene, the latter became a mere pronoun, whose name should not be uttered. This is an essential element in the so-called game of the woman. Always, even within the subconscious, when it's about another woman together with her boyfriend, husband, lover or just a guy that absolutely "all" the other women want, they will have a shortcoming, she will try, by the "other's" shortcomings, to reveal more and more qualities for herself, so that she would also find a shortcoming to God if she could and

if she weren't convinced that, by drawing divine hate upon her, she might become really ugly, strictly and figuratively speaking.

"Did that mentally disturbed man recovered as a result of your trying to cure him?" asked Christine.

"Yes, Chris."

"Fantastic. Then why didn't she recover?"

"I don't know, Chris. I wish she did, Chris. I really don't know why it wasn't like that. I gave it a lot of thought about what I could have done wrong. I've been thinking about what happened again and again, thousands and thousands of times in my mind. I couldn't find any clues to show my Why she didn't recover."

"That's strange, Sorin". To be honest with you, I don't really believe in these unconventional practices", said Christine.

"I still believe, for example the Philosopher ..."

"Who?" asked Christine.

"That guy who recovered as a result of the practices I learned in that lamasery in Tibet."

"OK, Sorin, let's say I agree with you, then why do you think the woman you've been with didn't recover? What do you think the cause might have been? The reason? The essence, if you want to?" said Christine with a victorious look, thinking that I will finally give up. Irene turned from "she", "the woman", which proved me that Christine started to push it to the peak level of tolerance. It was a specifically feminine way of getting the hang of things. If she were completely uninterested in Irene, she wouldn't have talked about her as "the woman". To be honest, I wished I forgot about Irene. I knew this was not possible, as it would have been completely impossible to live without the past, which would have made me reject the future. Doesn't Christine realize that she might become the future? Anyway, I will have to prove her that I cannot live without the past, that is belongs to me, as it is, good or bad. This time, trying to feel the temperature of a liquid that is still hot, she burned her finger. So I decided to answer her:

"I think and I'm sure that the reason, the essence, the cause why Irene didn't recover is this: Sorin". I answered saying Irene instead of she. I almost uttered "my wife Irene", which would have pushed even farther towards the back of the battle-front.

"Irene's Sorin", said Christine, syllabifying the name of my poor wife as if she would have heard it for the first time now and she had to memorize it. This time I was more than convinced that Christine was interested in me, that her presence on that seat was not purely figurative. Why shouldn't I admit, she had brought me a feeling of joy. I wish she understood that:

"I have a past, Chris, a past that I cannot change, however much I would like to. You know very well that the past is a used future in which the Free Will is so worn out that it cannot be used any more. Each of us has its past, good or bad, it is ours, it belongs to us and however hard we might try to run away, to hide from it, it is impossible, Christine."

"Why do you think it is impossible?" asked Christine.

"Because without the past we cannot be given a future, because the future is connected to the past. There are some temporal dimensions that we cannot ignore, Chris."

"Maybe you are right, Sorin. In a way, I like the way you think. Not all men are" Christine paused and she tried to continue a phrase which she probably wouldn't have liked to say, realizing that she had given herself away.

"Aware like me, Christine?"

"That too. Not all men are both married and profound."

"Profound, Chris?" I replied.

"Yes, Sorin."

"What do you understand by men's profoundness? A guy who uses aftershave every morning, who uses perfume and who knows how to court women?"

"Maybe this too, Sorin."

"And, yet, Christine, what do you understand by that profoundness?"

"I can't tell you exactly. Anyway, I don't think I find a man profound because he can philosophize and neither because he has clean shoes or because his feet smell nice when he takes off his shoes in the plane. Maybe the way he kisses, the way he knows how to understand a woman, to listen to her and, why not, to console himself all his life with the fact that he has a wife whom he cannot enjoy as he likes. First of all he has to prove that he is a man. To let the woman go first. Regardless the situation. To buy her flowers, and the list might go on for three lives and I still couldn't say what a woman actually wants from a man so that she can consider him profound. Don't you find it strange, Sorin?"

"Oh, of course, I find it really strange. You, women, are so difficult to understand."

I knew that such an answer would please Christine. The truth is that I found her answer strange, in deed, but not unexpected. I expected something like that. A woman will never accept a dimension or a phrase that would strictly define what makes a man profound because she wouldn't be a woman any more. They always have to feel that they are the center of the Universe, that profoundness was given by God only for them, that man was absent from the place where God shared out all the positive attributes, including profoundness. There is only one thing that the woman refused. That was the physical strength. She didn't need it and she gave it to man so he can work, tough, physical work to victual the table.

"that's right", said Christine. "A man should have something of all these to be profound."

"Of what you have just told me, Christine?"

"Yes, Sorin."

"But, Christine, although you have told me so many things about a man should have in order to become profound in the eyes of a woman, I would like to ask you to tell me one thing. I would like you to tell me what can make a man profound in the eyes of a woman, to reduce all that you could enumerate for three lives to a single word."

"I don't think that's possible, Sorin."

"Please try, Christine."

"I'll try, but why do you necessarily want to know that? Don't you think it is too early? We have just met", said Christine.

"It's true, Chris, we know each other for a short time, but this doesn't mean that" I didn't want to go on, neither. This time I realized that I have made a mistake trying to let my soul out. Christine immediately caught it and she attacked:

"This doesn't mean what?" she interfered. I realized that I have no other choice but to tell her what I felt for her on that moment.

"This doesn't mean that you are indifferent to me, or maybe that I'm not indifferent to you either." Her look met mine. I could notice in her eyes a sort of bewilderment, just like you would take a thief by surprise in front of the money safe. I knew that she knew and that she was expecting such an answer but she didn't think that I would have the courage to lay it in front of her so "safe and sound".

"Maybe you are right", said Christine, looking for the first time within the depths of my soul. It was for the first time when she did that. I could feel her exploring me, piece by piece, bit, by bit, pulling me down so that afterwards she would put the pieces back together.

"However, Chris, can you tell me one single word which can reflect exactly the man's profoundness?" She continued to look into my eyes without blinking. "I would like to be as honest as possibly with me, Chris" I told her while I was looking into the endlessness of her eyes. I felt like there was a deaf battle in each of us, a battle with future, with destiny. I felt that neither of us wanted another painful past that would come on the wings of future like a tornado and leave behind the ruins of some feelings, of a love that grew somewhere over twelve thousand meters above the Earth, over the Pacific, in a flight from Singapore to Sidney.

"Honestly, honestly", said Christine.

"Honestly", I answered.

"Sex", whispered Christine.

"Sex", I repeated. And that's all. "Would you leave me my past, Chris?"

"I will, but take care of the future."

"OK, Chris."

"I'm afraid, Sorin."

"Of what, Chris?"

"Of the endlessness in your eyes, Sorin. I wouldn't like the past to come again and cloud your eyes", whispered Christine.

"Do you think that, Chris?"

"I don't know, Sorin?"

"Are you afraid of the past?"

"I don't know, Sorin?"

"You shouldn't be."

"Why not?"

"Because being afraid of the past you won't be able to accept the future. We all have to understand that life, through love and goodwill, has unforeseeable resources of understanding that the sun always raises after night and the first rays of light will warm our destinies in their way towards ..."

"Death", said Christine.

"Towards death", I answered too.

"But the daybreak is coming, Sorin."

"A new day is coming, Christine."

"After night", said Christine.

"After such a long night", I answered. On that moment I felt our lips drawing close to each other, I felt the endlessness in her eyes becoming clearer than ever. I can feel the heat of her leaps. We were kissing for the first time. I hadn't done it in so many years. It all came by itself, and neither of us could understand what was going on within our souls. We were flying and we were kissing, and all the philosophy in the world, all the philosophical words are not as a true kiss, which you want without knowing why, through which you can feel the person you love, you want or you just kiss, that its breath is one with your breath, that you both have one heart throbbing your blood to your hot lips, like a whole, irreparable, but most of all it is the deep look with closed eyes. All these can be found in a kiss. Something more than philosophy. Only now I understood why each century had its philosophy and why man started to philosophize probably since the most immemorial times. The answer is as easy as the kiss itself. Man was born alone and what he didn't understand was: "Why wasn't he born as a whole? Why is he predestined to look for his half which he will never actually find because love does not last more than two or three years. Then there is boredom and restlessness. The person who used to be a god in your soul, is just a piece of meat today. The one who used to shine more bright than diamond and more noble than gold, becomes darker than soot and less noble than cooper. Then why are we looking for our match? Why are

we cursed to never be really happy? People who say that they love their partner after twenty years of marriage just like they did at the beginning are lying. During all these years, their love turned into friendship but not any kind of friendship, but one between two surfeited people, defeated by life and selfish, especially selfish. Why? Because at a certain moment you will come to see your partner as your own asset, together with the spoons, forks, house, flower pot, soap or teeth brush. And yet you will lie to yourself that your feelings for him or her are great love, in fact you would probably feel something much deeper if somebody stole your house. In this case you cannot state that you are madly in love with your house because it would be false. What you can state is that you are terribly sorry about the house, because it was yours and you find it difficult to let go. It is a kind of selfishness to feel that an object belongs only to you, just like the soap or the teeth brush. Of course, the level of "suffering" also depends to the importance of the respective object. Of course you would rather lose a teeth brush than your house. It is the same with a husband and wife after several years of living together. The only binder that really keeps them together their selfishness towards each other. The idea that the other person that you used to see as your half belongs to you today. His/her qualities that used to make you fall for him/her are of no importance today. All that matters is that you live the first moments at the highest intensity because those that would come after two or three years of living together won't be the same by far. Many married couples accept lie as being a king of savior of their marriage, accepting the so-called false love just because they don't want to lose a person that belongs to them like the grass trim machine, for example. In way, I think they are right here, because they don't want to lose what they have built during the long years of hard work. There are many couples that pretend to love each other and yet they sleep back to back. Don't I sincerely love Irene? Was I lying every time I said that I loved her, that I couldn't live without her? Were those ten years we spent hoping that she would recover a price we had to pay to the absurd?

I'm still kissing Christine. We feel like to people lost in an endless desert, two people who, after several days of crawling, finally reached an oasis with thick palm trees and ice-cold water whose waves shine in rays of the morning sun. That oasis is called the Kiss Oasis.

While I'm kissing Christine I cannot help but thinking again of those ten years I spent without a woman, a kind of monk without monastery, and all these because I would state that I loved Irene. I admit that at the beginning I really loved her, but after a few years our love, which was so passionate at the beginning, turned into a tiresome habitude for both of us. We knew that we were both trying hard to keep our marriage floating, especially because we had Mark, a boy who definitively needed both his parents.

But then what happened when I lost Irene? Did I love her so much that I didn't realize? Is love hidden someplace behind the destinies of the two spouses so it appears like a bright comet when a break appears in their life? Until a short while ago they were one and the same person, as alien as possible from itself, as dehumanized as possible, loosing everything of what once was called the personality of a couple in love and full of life, becoming an entirely opposite person, changing the glaring pink for the black of "the love that changes in time", saying instead of the passionate words of love: "I couldn't live without you" or "I wouldn't like to live a single moment without you because that moment would seem forever", words like: "Tomorrow will be another boring day. I wish I could go to the mountains or to the sea-side, anywhere. I feel that I must change the landscape, to relax". Although, at the beginning, there was no better way of relaxing than to be with the person you were in love with.

At a certain moment, when I realized I had lost Irene it hurt, not the need I once

had, that imperious need of change, but exactly: the change. Then I understood that Irene, by her own existence as a wife, refused me that variety of having other women too, a liberty of mine that did not only consist in the sexual issue but first of all emotional. I understood that Irene, by her presence, was creating a monotony that I got used to and that I wanted as long as I knew that it existed. When the whole monotony had ended, I could see the seriousness of the illness that sapping her. I wouldn't have wanted to lose her for the world, because monotony became a habit that I couldn't realize. How necessary can the disappearance of the habit can become to me! Maybe I loved this habit of being a married man, with a family, bored, just like any other married man, of his wife after several years of marriage, with a children, but also with a wife who goon in everything, in sex, in keeping company, in cleaning the house. Women feel the same way. Just like men, the interest of keeping a marriage they lost a few years for, makes them overlook the boredom, the stereotypy, in a word the

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monotony that characterizes life in two. They both come to lie themselves, believing in that story of great love that never dies and in the books and movies of questionable taste in which everything is eternal, in which both she and he cover each other with lots of feelings and kisses that would fertilize their souls and sexes for ever.

I think I've been kissing Christine for over ten minutes. I think I never kissed anybody for such a long time before. **After all, our whole life is a folly that is worth living only for getting to know own strait jacket if not strictly speaking, at least figuratively.**

I kiss Christine's hands thrown around my neck. I would give anything to know what she is thinking of on those moments. If she knew what I am thinking of, would she still kiss me so passionately? Who knows? I'm thinking that losing Irene I lost a habit, a habitude that I found very hard to part with. Irene was, at the same time, a woman in bet a housekeeper and an excellent businesswoman. I lost all these in one person. I admit that, on that moment, I thought I couldn't find a woman with so many qualities any more. In time, marriage changed me too, as it happens in most people's cases. I turned from a hunter who rarely misses his prey, into a soft guy who is always given the prey on the table. I was like an animal that had been kept in a cage for a long time that at a certain moment forgot how to procure its food, when it is set free again, it doesn't know what to do with its freedom, longing for the captivity. This is what happened to me too. After so many years I got used to Irene in bed and in daily life as well. I got used to receive everything I wanted, including sex, as if it was normal to deserve it any time, day or night. Nevertheless, I knew that I was one of the most naive men because I wasn't cheating on her! The more things I got without moving a finger, the more pronounced the monotony became and the more I was thinking of other women. It is true that on those moments I didn't realize how much I needed monotony. In spite of my thoughts of debauchery, I didn't realize that I wasn't the same guy any more, the one who knew how to flirt with at least a quarter of the women in Dallas. I had completely lost my hunter sense. I was like a beast that is given the prey in readiness in a cage of a zoo bearing the name of: marriage. Only now, after more than ten years I realize that I have this instinct again. That I have to make a change of plans in my life, that my old cage itself have rusted for a long time now and the zoo went bankrupt. I am kissing Christine like I never kissed anyone before. I kiss her with a passion that comes from fury I am feeling right now, a fury of the fate because I lost ten years of my life uselessly, trying to follow the Absurd. Now, through this long kiss I realize that I no longer need any philosophy, that the most profound philosophy that ever existed is: **"Enjoy the moment and don't ask why". I realize now why philosophy was born and how. First of all it was born out of fear and of the human suffering, of Human**

Condition that includes in its arsenal of illusions two truths "Suffering and Love". During our lives, the Absurd prevents us from ever understanding on of those two truths of the Human Condition. Then we philosophize. When we are sad, happy, in grieved, full of love, of passion, when we don't know which way to go in life: we philosophize. Considering the number of philosophical sentences, which were written, but especially unwritten, we can realize what the history of humankind meant: Punishment and Expiation. This is our history. Beside the fact that Suffering and Love are the two Coordinates of the Human Condition, we are not even allowed to Love for ever in this life. Why? Because we don't have access to happiness. That's why now, when I'm losing myself in this long kiss in which I felt that we tore up like some prey animals that have finally got to hunt their first prey after long years of captivity in a wild morning of their life, I knew why we were kissing so wild. I understood the importance of that sentence that had crossed my mind a few minutes ago: **Enjoy the moment and don't ask why!**

"Are we happy on those moments, are we really happy? Am I really happy like was when I was a child and during some winters when could see how it snowed with large wet flakes?"

New-York was wonderful when the first snowfalls were coming down.

All the kids from my building in Manhattan were running to the backyard where they used to happily scream and jump about, said Christine still holding her arms round my neck. Then she went on: I wish you became that first childhood snow in my heart, Sorin, and never melt away, but last forever, said Christine obviously excited.

"On the contrary, Christine, I wish you always left traces in my soul by stepping on the snow drifts that gathered there as a result of the eternal snowfalls, Christine."

"Let God decide, Sorin."

"You're right, Christine."

"Where exactly are you going in Australia, Sorin?"

"To Melbourne", I answered her.

"I'm going to Melbourne too", said Christine with a joyful and a little bit amazed tone of voice.

"How is it that we both have the same destination?" I asked her obviously surprised this time.

"I don't know, Sorin, I think it is destiny. Do you really believe in Destiny, Sorin?"

"Yes, actually I've told you that before having you by my side I had been thinking about Sorin over and over again. I even succeeded in creating my really own philosophy, which I didn't believe I was capable to conceive, to formulate nor to understand some things that seemed totally inaccessible to me before."

"What kind of philosophy, Sorin?"

"A philosophy which I would like to keep to myself, as I'm a little afraid that you won't understand me and even if you understood me and you completely agreed with me I think the best thing is that each man should be allowed to have a certain philosophy of his own, hidden somewhere in a corner of his soul. From what I know, people seldom agree to discuss philosophic matters and that is not because they wouldn't want to do it. For this kind of activity one needs solitude and first of all one needs to really listen to himself, to try to understand himself and last but not least he mustn't lie to himself, he must try to be honest with himself, sincerely admitting all his passions, desires, feelings and last but not least: **his weaknesses**. All this things can't be done with words as they are not entirely the power and the magic of thinking. That's why I don't believe in spoken philosophy as I don't believe in the philosophical verbal dialogue but only in the one thought by oneself."

"Do you believe in madness, Sorin?"

"Why are you asking me that, Christine?"

"Because a man like you would never be able to answer such a question by yes or no." said Christine.

"You're right, Christine, I couldn't allow myself to state that easily that I'm a guy who believes in madness or who thinks little of it. **What I can tell you, Christine, is that our life, slave to so many paradoxes, is a madness that some simply call: the Adventure. The trouble is that the adventure is inoculated in our flesh and bones through our own genetic code, since we are born. Our life wouldn't exist if this adventure or society wouldn't exist either. We need this shadow of madness to get us out of the mirage of this illusion that is our life, to become somehow unforeseeable for ourselves through it. The more unforeseeable and spontaneous we become, the more we will succeed to play more tricks on life, eventually making it let itself be lived by us and not let it live us. On the other hand, I don't think we need the pathological aspect of madness in our spiritual-dimensional level. It's nothing but the cruelest and at the same time the merciless indicator that wants to show us how we can be dead, as souls of course, for this spiritual-dimensional level in which we find ourselves. The madmen's souls exist at some other different spiritual levels, but their bodies remain here like vegetables. There is a golden rule of the mob, that is: if you don't conform to its principles you are considered discordant so, in more popular terms, mad. I don't deny that these madmen could live with their souls in some existential system in which they are normal and think as normal as one can, but in our spatial-dimensional system they are discordant.**"

"Who are you, Sorin?" said Christine smiling.

"Who am I, Christine? It depends how you want me to answer you to this question."

"As sincerely as you can, Sorin."

"I don't know who I am", I answered her on the most self-confident tone of voice. I couldn't lie to her.

"Then?" Christine asked.

"Then, I sometimes try to discover myself, but I haven't really managed to find much about myself except that my name is Sorin Cerin, a guy who liked philosophy in his teenage and college years and then reached the conclusion that it was no good to him and that it was just a waste of time ..."

"Why?" Christine interrupted me.

"Why what?" I asked her.

"Why did you think of it as a waste of time?"

"For the mere fact that I've never succeeded in building up my own outlook on world and life, on spirit, until I was put in a very strange situation in life."

"What situation?" whispered Christine.

"The situation in which I had to choose between my past, between Irene and my possible future, Christine, that is you. During this period in which I've been thinking how to decide my future by trying not to erase my own past which actually represents me and which, if I had erased would have totally depersonalized me, I came up with my own philosophy, this time without even wishing it, entirely mine from a neoontological, that is existential point of view, and from a gnoseological one, that is, from the point of view of the knowledge. Before, I had come to consider the philosophical study a waste of time as I was in a position where I had read entire volumes by philosophers, some of them subjective idealists, others objective idealists and others even materialists, but what I can sincerely say is that, the more I read, trying to define a concept of my own about world and life, the more I felt that I was deeply sinking into ignorance, incertitude and absurd. All this until one day when I decided never again to read a philosophical

page. What is even stranger is the fact that I would have considered anything possible but I would have never thought that I would come to build up my own outlook on world and life if I met a woman somewhere on a airport at the tropics."

"It means I'm auspicious to you?" asked Christine.

"As I can see, the night turned into day, Christine."

"I would like you to describe me a little bit of your philosophy situated between two airports and two women, on a plane over the Pacific."

"I don't think this is the right time Christine and also, I'm not sure I can remember where my thoughts have been during hours and hours of flight. I think I'll try to describe it to you in a few words, but not here and not now, but in Melbourne, what do you say?"

"O.K. Sorin, if now you're not willing to."

"I wouldn't want you to get upset, Chris?"

"Don't worry, everything is OK", said Christine smiling and then continued: "If you don't want to do it now, you don't want to and that's that."

"I promise I'll tell you in Melbourne."

"O.K." said Christine. "I have one more question and then my list of questions for this flight is over, Sorin."

"What question, Chris?"

"Where have you met Irene? Better said how, in what circumstances have you two met?"

"Again it's a strange incident. It happened also in a mean of transportation!"

"Just like that?" said Christine.

"Not really." I answered her. "It was a Greyhound. I was coming from Los Angeles and I was returning home to Dallas."

"To Dallas, Texas?" said Christine.

"Yes, I'm originally from Texas, I was borne in Mc Kinney, a suburb of Dallas."

"I like Texan men, they are straightforward." said Christine.

"I like New York women too, they are smart."

"You don't have to praise us so much, Sorin. And then what?"

"Irene had got on at El Paso. She happened to sit down on a chair on my right."

"Oh, yes", said Christine laughing and then she went on. "On the father's right, right?"

"Something like that Christine, if you like it."

"I like it, Sorin, because right now I also happen to sit on the father's right." We both laughed.

"So that's how you've met her", said Christine again.

"Yes, Chris, like that."

"Somehow similar to me. Also during transportation."

"Exactly, Christine."

"Did you also kiss her too?"

"Not really."

"Let's say, I believe you Mr. Cerin", said Christine on an amused tone.

"By no means like that. It is for the first time in my life I kiss a woman like that. I think it was more than a quarter of an hour." I answered her.

"A quarter of an hour?" said Christine amazed.

"Something like that", I said.

"You really don't realize what time means? It lasted exactly twenty eight minutes and thirty seconds?"

"How do you know, Christine, have you been looking at the watch all that time?"

"Nothing like that, Sorin, but I peeped at the watch the moment we started kissing

as I would have wished this flight to be as long as possible, I didn't wanted it to end because I was somehow afraid I wouldn't see you again. I was under the impression that the whole kiss had only lasted for two or three minutes but when my eyes accidentally stopped on the hands of the watch I realized that twenty eight minutes and thirty seconds had past."

"I think you would enjoy a job somewhere in a control post or in a control tower."

"Why, Sorin?"

"As you always know the exact hour you would never fail in such a job." We both laughed and hugged. In the end Christine whispered to me:

"Only now when I found out you were a Texan I realized we actually didn't even know each other. I don't know why, although we know each other for such a short while, I have the impression that I've known you forever, that our souls are older than the Time itself, which, whether I wanted or not, hasn't been doing anything else for an entire history but divide or separate destinies." said Christine and curled herself up into my arms.

"You are right, Chris", I said, for the first time noticing the sweet smell of her favorite French perfume.

"What I can't understand, Sorin, is how were you able to save the Philosopher but not Irene?" Christine asked me.

"It is true, my dear Chris, for me everything is a puzzle I can't solve. I've tried so many times but in vain."

"Do you have many things to do in Melbourne?" asked Christine.

"So and so", I answered her.

"Don't joke with me Sorin, I really want to know."

"Really?" I answered her.

"All right, I'm going to get angry", said Christine on a spoilt tone.

"Maybe you shouldn't", I answered her. "All the things I have to do don't take more than four hours, what about you, Christine?"

"Oh, maybe two days and more after you have finished."

"Meaning?" I asked her.

"I have to do a three days broadcast for the news bulletins for the TV station I work at from a conference on ecological matters attended by South Pacific area governmental officials."

"And that means?" I asked her.

"It means?" Christine answered with a question.

"It means you will be busy all day long."

"Normally I should but actually I won't", said Christine while picking up the little plastic tray with the breakfast on it and giving it to the flight attendant.

"What do you mean?" I asked her.

"I have no intention of staying there twelve hours to listen all kinds of meaningless chatting. No one will take any measure anyway. This kind of conferences are the attributes of some politicians who wish to go up in the electors' choice or of some governments who wish to show their interest for the waters of the oceans which are so polluted that even the whales have started to commit suicide. Then they will chatter endlessly about the ozone layer which is in a continue degradation and which only the long time would be able to restore. Our lungs, the mortality in the animal world will be again taken into account and again the same poetry without too much action. Why?"

"Why?" I answered her with another question.

It's been more than a year since I'm with Christine.

I've grew to love her more and more each day, feeling that my life belongs to every day and every moment that we were meant to share together. We have spent two

weeks in Melbourne. Those have been unforgettable moments. I remember the Mall Tower Irene had told me about. I don't know why I do it, I've never asked myself why and I've never will. I want no more questions, no more philosophy. All I know is that I asked Christine to marry me next to the Mall Tower, in the center of Melbourne. I've told her: "Christine, can you see the rain that trickles down on the old general's forehead, on the forehead of the Mall Tower? Do you think that the rays of the Southern Star can't get through the clear glass ceiling?" It was the beginning of the Australian winter. I looked at the general's forehead where Irene had climbed once. But I could feel Christine's warm hand in mine. I started tearing. I knew that one day, in her youth, by making an alliance with the old general, Irene used to fight a war of her own faith, of her own Destiny, in a word, a war of everything that was limited with the endlessness she wanted to conquer, to identify through it as the stars do on the shiny mirror of the ocean when it is still and pensive, seriously thinking at life itself which it gave to those beings mostly made up of its bodily waters. And in spite of all this I haven't even asked myself: why? After all, it was useless. Irene had left with her soul for other spaces, abandoning the old, time-hunted general which stays in our Spiritual-Dimensional Level. Why? Why does it rain in the Australia in winter? Why do the flocks of sheep graze peacefully on the gentle hills defying even the eternity with their white spots which wipe away the yellow green of the hills bored with all that time which has weathered their faith since who knows what distant geological eras. Why? Why was I feeling Christine's soul next to me and Irene's abandoning me, in those moments? Why did I wish to find it again without ever truly finding it? Why? Didn't I know what I wanted and where I was heading? Why was I crying over the past, because of the past and in the same time running away from it? Why was I trying to understand what was impossible to understand and to cry in the silence: Where to? Then I turned my eyes from the old general and looked Christine into her eyes. I wanted to tell her that all the gold in the world is a stinking swamp, that the highest mountains are just little sand knolls made by children in the summer on the beach, that the Sahara desert is the Canaan of the humanity and the never-ending ice fields from the poles are the furnace in which even the strongest metals can be melted down if and only if there is only one feeling of past and of future. Then, on that moment, I simply told her, on the most natural tone of voice: "why don't you marry me, Chris?" She answered me:

"Why don't you marry me, Sorin?"

I answered her nothing because there was nothing more to say and I couldn't have said anything anyway. Once more I turned my eyes to the old general which I had identified as a boundary between my past and my future, as my own present which identifies me. On that very moment I thought of myself as being an old general, hidden from the deteriorating powers of time somewhere in a Mall, in order to be preserved. I don't know why and actually I don't even want to know why Irene had once picked this Mall Tower as being that thing which represented her the same way that today it represents me?

Why? Why is the night followed by day and then again by night?

It's been three years and three months since I last saw Irene. Today I received a phone call from Mark. He called me somewhere in Bronx to have a talk. He wouldn't tell me on the phone what was about. As a matter of fact why would he? We arranged to meet me at a corner of a street where he asked me to leave my car and take his. I had bought him a second hand Chevrolet as I knew they were strong cars and as a beginner he needed something solid. I asked him while he was driving what was the reason of this unusual invitation. I can say that lately Mark had started to visit me more and more seldom and he was never the one who made the invitation. I saw him heading towards Manhattan and about to cross the bridge that connects the island to the continent. I

asked him: "Where are we going, Mark?" He answered me:

"Surprise, daddy, surprise!" Then I let him drive quietly. I was sure he was inviting me at some football game or something else of the kind. After all, I was his father and it was the most normal thing for him to feel the need to be with his own father once in a while. We got somewhere in the south part of Harlem and we were heading towards the Lincoln Center. After a short while Mark turned to the right and I realized I was on the street under which the subway with the number three red was rolling. I instantly realized I was two steps away from Columbia University. I was sure we'll pass the University but Mark suddenly made a left turn on one of the little streets which were close to Columbia, just in front of the park where me and Irene had slept many years ago. It was the park where we had slept our first night in New-York, where we had our things and money stolen. I couldn't but ask Mark:

"What made you bring me here?" Surely he didn't know about that unforgettable night spent in the park. Could it be just a coincidence, just an accident? Mark answered me, this time with the most nervous voice.

"Daddy, I've told you, it's a sur-prise!"

"O.K. In the end why not wait. I hope it wouldn't last that long, Mark, until I found out what your surprise is about because this park means something to my past, because..."

"I know." says Mark interrupting me.

"Because ..." On a bench in front of me there was Irene in person. I couldn't believe it. Her look was different. I noticed she almost hadn't changed a thing all this fifteen years. Just a few locks of white hair. That look of sick person had disappeared from her eyes. She had the look I always knew, the look I had got so accustomed with. She stood up in front of me with her eyes lost in mine. Neither one of us could say a word. We stayed like that for a long time. I don't know why I've asked her:

"Is this really you?" although it was useless. I immediately realized what a stupid question I had uttered. I couldn't find any purpose to it until, after letting a few moments pass, Irene answered me: "And you?"

Only then did I realized that actually the question I asked without thinking wasn't stupid at all, that it needed an answer which I found it as difficult to give as it would have been for me climb the Everest from foot to top with a mule on my back. And me? Was I really me? Me, Sorin, a Texan who one day stole Paradise the foal or met Irene in a greyhound that rolled between El Paso and Dallas. My God, Irene had recovered. I was trying to be strong although I was feeling like screaming and crying. Am I really my? Maybe Sorin Cerin is a stranger and I feel he will abandon me today. It had got dark. It was snowing with big snowflakes although this was New-York.

I haven't even realized when it started to snow. In the end it is an American Winter, sincere, pure, so that there's no use for words anymore.

"Are you cold?" said Irene as I only had my coat on. I had left my overcoat on the backseat of Mark's car.

"Cold?" I repeated under the form of a question. These were maybe the most torrid moments of my life. I wished I were cold. But no, that was impossible, impossible, impossible, I was hot like hell, so hot that at one point I felt the need to loosen my necktie. I would have wanted to hug her, but I realized I couldn't, even now I don't know why.

Maybe because Christine was waiting for me at home, maybe because I didn't even know if I was me anymore. I knew there were big, thick snowflakes in an American Winter. That three years and three months had past since the Philosopher experiment, that that "Three" which the Philosopher's secretary had said when he was in trance state had been decisive.

"If you still think you are really you, look for us, I've recovered" said Irene while she and Mark were heading towards his car. I stayed in the park for one more hour without being able to say a word. I had forgotten my over coat in Mark's car. The snow had fallen down on the benches and probably on me because much later I felt the snow burning me like a sacred fire of the beginning of the world. I kept asking myself over and over again without being able to come up with an answer: "Why is the American Winter snow burning? Why? Why necessarily this number: three?"

